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THE DOCTOR LOOKS AT BIOGRAPHY

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PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES OF LIFE AND LETTERS

BY

JOSEPH COLLINS

AUTHOR OF "THE DOCTOR LOOKS AT LITERATURE," "TAKING THE LITERARY PULSE," "IDLING IN ITALY," "MY ITALIAN YEAR," ETC.

NEW YORK

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To

LIGHTNER WITMER

Psychologist and Educator

TO RECALL STUDENT
DAYS IN GERMANY

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author expresses his thanks to the editors of *The Bookman, McNaught's Monthly, The International Book Review,* and *The New York Sun* for permission to elaborate material used by them into certain chapters of this volume.

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Part I: BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

But all, the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account:
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's
amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped:
All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher
shaped.

RABBI BEN EZRA.

THE DOCTOR LOOKS AT BIOGRAPHY

Part I: Biography and Autobiography

I

BIOGRAPHY

BIOGRAPHY is the story of a life, told by the man who lived it or by the student of it. Biography does not consist solely of a record of the events and adventures that constitute the actual and visual side of existence. It is not merely a chronological narrative of happenings, from which the reader may divine the inner and hidden qualities of the subject: it is primarily a statement of the subject's thoughts and strifes, ambitions and realisations—and, as thoughts and ambitions condition action, behaviour and achievement, that which we call the "life" of a man flows from them. Biography presents a picture of a mind, a soul, a heart; of an environment; of successes and failures that make, or seek to make, the subject immortal. Biography strives to make the subject as real as a character in fiction; actually, it makes him as real as life. This, of course, applies to good biography, to that sort of writing which may be classed as a branch of literature, are not to the formless productions that are often labelled "biography" and "autobiography."

The art of living has always been man's preoccupation, and has afforded him constant and unlimited interest. This inter-

est is increased by the opportunities he has of looking into the past, and of learning how others "turned the trick" called living. From biography man gets moral, physical, mental and emotional assistance; he sees where others have failed and why; he recognises avoidable obstacles and handicaps; he learns the value of health and its relation to happiness; and he is made to see that material prosperity does not always spell spiritual welfare. He appreciates the meaning of culture and its influence on the individual and his time; he runs the gamut of emotions that are aroused by all good biographies; he suffers vicariously, or enjoys objectively with the subject. His own life therefore becomes happier and more complete because of his intimate sojourn with a successful predecessor.

To some readers, biography affords the opportunity of gleaning historical facts without hard work; as a matter of fact much might be said about the similarity of the two arts. It is safe to presume that Voltaire would say about biography what he said about history: "a lie agreed to." Less stress, however, can be laid on the "agreed to" in regard to biography, because whereas history is officially admitted to be true, biography, not dealing exclusively with facts, is the stepping stone between fiction and history. Indeed, the fictionist is a biographer; when he creates a type of individual, he becomes his biographer, all the more so since the type exists only in his imagination. To blow the breath of life into the nostrils of a statue as Aphrodite did in answer to Pygmalion's prayer is a remarkable achievement, but to lay bare the human soul so that he who walks leisurely may read, compares favourably with it. When a biographer studies a character in real life, or when a man writes his own life, he has opportunity, by masterful handling of the theme, to push into the darkness characters that have been built by the fancy of the novelist, and to make them appear by contrast lifeless and stilted; for he deals with the very essence of life; it is a real heart which palpitates under his hand, real nerves that tingle and

thrill. The novelist must be content to deal with the children of his mind, the biographer with the children of God.

As an art, biography is older than the invention of writing. Doubtless it has existed since the creation of man. In ancient times, it took the form of tradition, transmitted by word of mouth, which later became the foundation of legends and mythology. It has now reached a high degree of development; this is the best proof that man is unable to build his life on the present alone, or on hope of the future. He must still refer to the past for encouragement and stimulation. To begin at the beginning, the masters of the remote ages had left to the world great treasures of biographical matter; from Xenophon we know about the philosophers, especially Socrates. The life of Alexander the Great is set down in immortal words by Quintus Curtius; Tacitus has left a biography of Agricola, familiarity with which is part of the classical education; and to go back still further, to an authority that has lost none of its prestige as centuries succeed centuries, the Old Testament abounds in biographies.

Plutarch is the parent of biographical art. His *Lives of Famous Men* is the source from which all later biography has flown. His conception of the art is the one we have to-day, save that he, like all other biographers of antiquity, sought to include an era in his studies. There was constant competition in the importance between his subjects as individuals, and the epochs in which these subjects lived. The tendency then was to put man a little in the shadow in order that his time might stand out clearly; as a result, biographies of olden times were more concerned with principles of truth and morals than with men; they were treatises through which the writer could expound his doctrines and principles. Soon, however, fortunately for the art under discussion, writers discovered that man alone is not big enough successfully to compete with his epoch, and in the Middles Ages, biographers realised that their task should be narrowly confined between two events: the

birth and the death of their subject. Outside events, revolutions, and world affairs must be reduced to the point where they could not diminish the importance of the person whose biography was written. It was then that biographies became the sort of literature they are to-day. They grew more subjective, more personal, more deserving of the definition Thomas Fuller gives the art of biography: "To hand down to a future age the history of individual men or women, to transmit their exploits and characteristics." The man as implicit self, explicit in action, the person and his personations, are what biography aims to depict.

The Greek's conception of personality as we understand it was most rudimentary. It consisted in the abundance of things which a man did. A recital of deeds by a chorus was an adequate reflection of the personality of a hero. It was not until Christianity put in practice its principle of self-analysis that consciousness of personality became dominant. Then it was made to embrace the abundance of things which a man is—and might have been.

When a biography is all that it should be in form and subject, it may be said to be the surest means of safeguarding a memory from oblivion. As Jacques Aymot, the first translator of Plutarch, said: "There is neither picture nor image of marble, nor triumphal arch, nor pillar, nor sepulchre that can match the durableness of an eloquent biography with qualities which it should have." Regrettably, there are few such biographies and, judging from the output of the past two or three years, there is small encouragement for believing that we shall ever have another Boswell. Like clothing, biographies of to-day look better than the old ones, but they do not wear so well.

Biographies are written for many reasons, but the chief one is a genuine desire to help others to live successfully. Now and then an author seeks egotistically to perpetuate his own name, to identify himself with some feature of immortality, but

as a rule the creation of such work is a response to the commemorative and altruistic urges. Man works, builds, suffers, progresses, thinks and hopes—then death comes before he has had time to finish a task which could never be completed, should he live a thousand years, the task of perfecting the world in the measure allotted to him. The only means at his disposal of passing on to future generations the wisdom he has so dearly learned is to write the story of his life, or to leave records and memoranda of it that some one else may write it.

Relatives and debtors of great characters should not undertake to be their biographers. Few have been successful in a gesture which is usually dictated by loyalty to the dead or by piety. Most of such works are written to order by widows profoundly appreciative of their departed husband's virtues and attainments; or by children or colleagues who would have their benefactor's virtues perpetuated. There are a few, however, which are definite contributions to personality studies—such as George Herbert Palmer's *Life of Alice Freeman Palmer* and René Valléry-Radot's *Life of Pasteur,* his father-in-law; and there are others which are important personality documents—such as *The Life of Olive Schreiner* and *The Letters of Olive Schreiner,* edited by her widower, and *Out of the Past,* by Margaret Vaughan, daughter of John Addington Symonds.

Biographies are read for many reasons: the chief one is to be found in the nature of man; neither angel nor demon, neither beast nor god, he is fascinated by his fellowmen; and their actions and reactions, which can generally be paralleled with his own or with those of his acquaintances, become part of himself and excite sentiments in him that the record of the life of an angel or of a demon could not arouse. Then, too, it is one of man's most dominant traits to show an untiring interest in the affairs of his neighbours, and as a rule, neighbours are delighted to show the inside of their houses, the manner in which they are cared for, and the pre-

occupations of those living in them. In reading biographies and autobiographies, we cherish the hope of discovering some hidden and monstrous secret, of finding enlightenment about the soul and its motives. If the subject has been a magnate in business, we expect to find an easy way to make a success in life; if he is a Martineau, we look for a formula for shouldering burdens; if the writer is a Papini, we seek for help to withstand failure.

All biographers do not use the same method to achieve their ends. All physicians do not use the same method to diagnosticate disease. Some do it by painstaking analysis of the symptoms; others by process of elimination. One biographer reveals the spiritual and physical development of the individual by narrating his conduct, relating his successes and failures and by giving detailed accounts of his forebears and environment; another takes the individual, endows him with certain distinctive qualities and then proceeds to analyse, and later to synthetise them for our approbation, admiration, or amazement.

Stories of individuals' lives have the fascination for adults that fairy tales have for children. They engender a variety of emotional states; most of them pleasurable and consequently beneficial. When we come upon one that excites anger or disgust or anything approaching it, there is no law or convention that compels us to continue reading it. Next to poetry, biography is the most satisfactory reading for all ages: instructive to youth, inspiring to maturity, solacing to old age. Its human interest, its preoccupation with man, brings it close to our understanding and to our emotions: "Truth," said Stevenson, "even in literature must be clothed with flesh and blood, or it can not tell its own story to the reader." Hence good biographies are more entertaining and more edifying than books of theory or precept. It is not astonishing that the reading world should be constantly concerned with the manifestation of personality; in no literary field can such manifestation

reveal itself more conspicuously, display itself more freely, explain itself more fully than in biographies and autobiographies.

Each age has its joys and preoccupations; each epoch its dominant tendencies and interests; these are displayed in contemporary writings more convincingly than in any other heritage that comes down to us, and the reading of biographies and autobiographies can do more toward giving us a clear and general vision of an epoch than any other study can do. In Plutarch's time, when oratory was prized equally with statesmanship, the great men who were to figure in the *Famous Lives* were chosen almost exclusively from those whose eloquence and whose diplomacy had made them prominent among their contemporaries. "Belles-Lettres" were a sign of culture then; beautiful expression of speech an art; hence, the biographies of famous men included especially orators and statesmen.

Later, when the world was engrossed in long periods of wars and conquests; when Mars was more venerated than the Muses; and when honours and glories went to those who distinguished themselves on the battlefield, crusaders and conquerors received the homage of mankind. Their lives and deeds were set down for posterity. Then came the long years of the Renaissance; the time when men's eyes were turned toward artistic possessions and achievements which heretofore had been neglected and which, as a result of familiarity with other countries, they had now learned to appreciate. They saw tendencies and realisations which theirs did not possess; they envied the artistic superiority of their neighbours and they steeped themselves and their children in the new beauty which had been revealed to them. The dominant passion of the cultured class—the class to which writing and reading were more or less familiar pleasures—was an adoration of art which had become the glory of the period. Small wonder that the greatest biographies and autobiographies of these times were

of artists. Vasari wrote of painters, sculptors and architects and Plutarch was his model and his master.

At a time when England was free from external and internal disturbances, a draper with literary bent solaced his old age with writing, and consequently we have in Izaak Walton's *Life of Richard Hooker* and of *John Donne* and three other friends, the first really great biography of modern times. The outstanding charm of Walton's *Lives* is that they reveal the author more clearly than the subject. With the exception of Walpole and Pepys, and possibly Boswell, no biographer, letter-writer or diarist has left his measure to posterity with such completeness and accuracy as did Walton.

The period of sophistication which the late seventeenth century saw in Europe is revealed especially by the Memoirs which abounded at the time. Saint-Simon and Madame de Sévigné, Madame de Motteville and Louis XIV, while embracing all contemporary history, give minute details of the famous men and women of that period. Later, when sophistication had been replaced by frivolity, and when the morals of the great nations of Europe had lost their decorum, free love and its pleasures, irresponsibility and antinomy became the fashion. The *Confessions* of Jean-Jacques Rousseau testify to this fact, although his preoccupations were subjective and introspective. He was determined to unveil himself so that the features of his life would be as clear to men as they had been to God. And there was a challenge in his gesture: he would expose all his vileness and then dare any one to say "I am a better man!" He wrote his autobiography at a time when his mental balance was not what it had been; but that is one of its greatest merits. It is a common impression among sane persons that the writings of psychopaths are without value or interest. They are usually of greater merit artistically, and far more informative and suggestive than those of the equilibrated. What Rousseau did for himself, lesser men were tempted to do for others, and thus from its most famous life-history, biographical writ-

ing got its first great stimulus in France. As time progressed and artistic achievement became less important, biographies were replaced by contributions "useful" to civilisation. Biographies and autobiographies then grew less concerned with ideals and became mirrors of personalities. Always a sign of the times, they were never more so than when they shed some of their introspection, and took on universality and externalisation.

Our conception of personality confronted with modern scientific analysis becomes less specific. We can not define self, we can describe it; it is so chameleon-like that the self of one day or one year is not like the one of the day before or the year after. In view of the tremendous and increasing interest in personality due to an awakening of the sense of personal responsibility, to the increasing interest in human immortality, and to the widespread and searching study of abnormal manifestations of personality, it is not to be wondered that biographical writing which aims at revealing personality is so popular.

The time has now come when every one writes biography or autobiography, and from every corner of the earth, and from every branch of human or divine activity, there pour forth studies of the lives of prominent representatives. Musicians, poets, novelists, artisans, actors, playwrights, moving-picture stars and would-be stars, unfrocked clergymen, prize-fighters, puzzle-makers, chess players, tennis champions, dethroned monarchs, manufacturers and jazzers have followed the movement, and as a result biographies are enjoying a great vogue. Soon people will make their living, not by taking in each other's washing as Mark Twain predicted, but by selling each other's biographies.

When the King of the Chewing Gum Industry and the Czar of the Chain Cigar Stores—or some one able to write better than they—shall have related their lives and revealed the secret of their success, we shall know nearly everything we need to

know about the business of life. Should Gerald Chapman have opportunity to publish his autobiography before he is hanged, we shall have a document rivalling in interest the greatest biographies of the past, for he would probably be able to display the sincerity of Jean-Jacques, the honesty of Benvenuto Cellini and the frankness of Dick Turpin. There seems to be no escape from the deluge, and it is probable that no escape should be wished for. There is no harm in writing one's biography; it is the subject that one knows best and about which one is supposed to know more than any one else. But, alas, it is given to only one man in a million to be really self-revelatory. The only thing that can legitimately be wished is that the facile biographer should evince the same ardour for truth, sincerity and form that he does for approval, approbation and applause.

If only a few of the hundreds of biographies and autobiographies that are constantly appearing succeed in surviving, there will be one thing for which our age should be gratefully remembered. For, if we know what a man really feels and thinks, we know the man, and forgiveness flows from understanding.

However, a careful study of modern biographies, with all credit to the few which prove that the art is not lost and that it has disciples and followers, does not reveal the existence of biographies or autobiographies of genius. None of the recent ones comes up to the standard of many of the great ones of the past. It is true that these set up such a stage of perfection that it would be fatuous to hope that such performance can be repeated by every biographer. Now and then one comes upon a meritorious book such as Valléry-Radot's *Life of Pasteur,* Charnwood's *Life of Abraham Lincoln,* Cushing's *Life of William Osler,* but they are few and far between. Of the hundred and more recent biographies and autobiographies that have been read in preparation of this volume, scarcely half a dozen

have real claim to distinction, and none is worthy of comparison with the great predecessors.

Opinions differ widely as to which is the greatest biography and the greatest autobiography ever written. In all such matters, taste alone does not prevail; opinions are formed according to what one seeks in biographies, and to the measure in which one finds it. Few readers, however, can resist the charm of Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson,* generally considered the greatest biography ever published. It is undoubtedly the most perfect portrait of a man ever painted with words; full-size, revealing all the blotches, pimples and blemishes and all the beauty in the complexion of the character. Boswell loved his subject, and then he studied it; love combined with critical perception, literary gifts blended with human understanding, beauty of form adapted to beauty of subject are the outstanding features of Boswell's *Life.* It is a model biography inasmuch as it has set a standard for this sort of intimate personal narrative; his exact reproduction of the conversations in their original form gives to the reader the impression that he is living with Johnson instead of making his acquaintance through a medium. And the best proof of the value and quality of this biography is that, thanks to James Boswell, Samuel Johnson is one of the best known men in history. No other character study has ever attained the perfection that the *Life* has attained; there is a touch of genius in Boswell, and remarkable literary facility. The more we study him, and the more we compare him with other biographers, the greater his work and his genius appear. Fortunately for his memory, the picture that posterity preserves of him is the one he painted himself, not that sketched by Geoffrey Scott in *The Portrait of Zélide.*

Lockhart's *Life of Walter Scott* may be said to be the most admirable biography in the English language, after Boswell's *Samuel Johnson.* Lockhart had all the odds in his favour

when he wrote his *magnum opus*. He had had the advantage of years of close intimacy with Walter Scott, who liked him as a writer of promise and achievement, before he loved him as a son; and Lockhart's sensitive and impressionable mind was the best fitted receptacle for the genius of his father-in-law. He devoted years to the writing of the biography which made him famous, and he made it a labour of joy. It is at once objective and subjective; it includes all the characteristics of the great Scotch writer; it is criticism and biography combined. Trevelyan came near accomplishing a similar success in *The Life and Letters of Macaulay,* a most satisfactory biography. *The Life of Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield,* by Monypenny and Buckle, an illuminating, accurate and complete account of a complex personality and of his ancestors, compares favourably with both of them. The modern biographies worthy to hold a place with these great ones are Sidney Lee's *Life of Shakespeare* and Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria.* There probably never was a more tangled jungle to explore, survey and stake out than that presented by the traditions, theories and conjectures that have grown around the greatest poet since Dante. Sir Sidney Lee succeeded in giving an exhaustive summary of everything credible that has been written about Shakespeare and he gave the *coup de grâce* to much that was not only fictitious but monstrous, particularly about the sonnets. There are few biographies that display such tact, insight, erudition, industry and judgment, and if popularity is in direct relationship to merit, it may be interesting to note that it has had ten editions since its first publication in 1898. The only one that rivals it is Strachey's *Queen Victoria,* but Strachey's task was much easier. It is, however, a great feat to have made known to her own people the Queen who reigned over them for more than sixty years!

Lord Byron, one of the most astonishing figures of the nineteenth century, found an exceptional biographer in Ethel

Colburn Mayne. Byron had the qualities of his defects and the defects of his qualities to an extraordinary degree. There was such disparity between his nature and his actions, his personality and its manifestations that it is a difficult task for any biographer to plumb his depth and reveal his intricacies. Although Moore wrote a life of him that has great merit, he did not succeed in doing this. Miss Mayne has, and her book is the best personality portrait of Byron that we have, and E. Barrington has not jeopardised its claim with *Glorious Apollo*. She played the double rôle of biographer and novelist, the latter a little too convincingly. It is gratifying to note that she changed her point of view in regard to Trelawny after reading Mrs. Olwen Campbell's *Shelley and the Unromantics*.

Biographers do not like to admit flaws in their heroes, and so Miss Mayne finds excuses for Byron's faults, passes lightly over his frailty and is extremely reticent concerning the great mystery of his life. She presents the facts of the "Astarte" question as they have been made known by Byron's grandson, Ralph, Earl of Lovelace, who died in 1906. Every person interested in literature knows that the book "Astarte" was written to vindicate the character of Lady Byron, who left her husband, alleging that he had had meretricious relationship with his half-sister, Augusta Leigh, and that he was the father of the child, Medora. Miss Mayne's comment is interesting: "Only pity will avail for understanding of this household and we need but know the future of the husband, the wife and Augusta Leigh for pity to constrain our heart."

Hero-worship is one of the necessary factors of good biographies. At the service of critical ability, and kept within the limit of facts, it may result in such seductive reading as Mr. Charles Wheeler Coit's *The Royal Martyr*. Charles I, of England, his tragedy and its causes are there rendered in their true light. A martyr he was, indeed—and modest like most martyrs. Mr. Coit has done historical biography a great service, because his book is more than readable—it has charm.

His display of erudition is nowhere overwhelming, but his fine use of English and the poetical turn of his prose make literature of what might have been a textbook. Love and loyalty to King Charles do not blind him to his weaknesses—but he finds apologies for them, and he is convincing. "The Royal Martyr" is one of the finest biographies, in the more serious line, that has recently come out of England. For the king, it will make hero-worshippers, and, for the biographer, admirers.

The best personality portrait with which I am familiar is that of John Addington Symonds, sketched and painted by himself and finished by his friend Horatio F. Brown. It is a model psychological biography which concerns itself particularly with the nature and display of the temperament of a man who was a strange mixture of mysticism and practicality, scepticism and credulity, piety and sensuousness, emotion and intellect; and who had, with it all, extraordinary energy, painstaking industry, tireless application. Practically a life-long invalid, and without the spur of poverty, he accomplished a stupendous amount of literary work of the first order: biography, essays, criticism, poetry, translation—which is likely to be more familiar to coming generations than it was to his own. His history of the Italian Renaissance, his translation of Benvenuto Cellini's *Memoirs* and his version of the sonnets of Michael Angelo give him a permanent place in literature.

Any one who would fit himself to recognise the neuropathic constitution, the maniac-depressive personality, the artistic temperament, the hedonistic attitude, the religious nature, can do so by reading comprehensively Horatio Brown's splendid biography of John Addington Symonds. Possessors of the phlegmatic temperament may get neither profit nor pleasure from reading it, but all others will, and many will get nourishing food for thought.

And now comes his daughter to say tactfully and deferentially that her father was not at all the kind of man that his

friend the Venetian historian depicted; at least she wants to tell the world that there were important facets of John Addington Symonds' nature that were not revealed by it. *Out of the Past* is a fascinating biography and it should succeed in reviving interest in an unusual personality who wore the mantle of Pico della Mirandola with grace and distinction.

Another satisfactory biography is Henry Morley's *Life of Jerome Cardan.* Jerome Cardan would seem to have been the last man to appeal to the fancy of an Englishman. He was versatile and unreliable; he had the qualities and the charm of his race, but few of its defects; his life was a constant pursuit of something ethereal and unreal, with, however, definite achievements as its basis. Henry Morley understood and interpreted his subject as though there were not between him and it the almost impenetrable wall of difference of nationality. Regardless of the admiration one may have for a foreigner, one can never get as close to him as to a countryman; the wall prevents it, and love does not always bridge it. Then, there was between them the wide span of time; almost three hundred years had passed since the death of Jerome Cardan, during which the Italian race had suffered more changes than the British race. All these did not render the biographer's task easier, but Morley's biography shows neither strain nor effort. It is written gracefully and emotionally, as becomes the biography of one of Italy's most graceful and most sensitive children.

Yet it is not this Morley, but one of his name, John, Lord Morley, who has gained a permanent position in biographic literature. The latter's series of studies on the literary preparation for the French Revolution, and his books on Burke, Cromwell and Gladstone entitle him to rank as the first critical biographer of his time.

His *Life of Gladstone,* though by no means a satisfactory biography of the man who was called the day he died, and not by an Englishman, "the world's greatest citizen," is a monu-

ment to his industry and an enduring testimonial to his literary distinction. But it is the life of the statesman, and Gladstone was not that alone—he was a moralist, a theologian, a prophet, and now, a generation after his death, a writer publicly brands him libertine and hypocrite! Man or superman, he had positive views about literature which he often expressed dogmatically. It may quite well be that the lasting substance of his fame is dependent upon his performances and ideals as statesman, but readers seeking instruction and diversion from biography want to be told of the facets of his personality. They would gladly exchange some of the debates and divisions, speeches and bills, for information about him on the personal rather than on the public side; they are as interested in a great Christian as they are in a great statesman, perhaps more so; they want him interpreted as a sign of his time just as they want Lincoln, or Cavour, or Bismarck interpreted.

Mrs. Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë,* after many vicissitudes, has taken a place among the great biographies. Soon after its publication about seventy years ago, it was alleged by many to be unsound, untruthful, unjust, but time has shown it to be a remarkably accurate picture of a humourless genius who was sensitive, shy and temperamental, and whose statements were sometimes founded in fancy rather than in fact.

Biography-writing has been influenced, as novel-writing has been, by the researches and discoveries of modern psychology, particularly by the teachings of Freud, and to a lesser extent of the behaviourists. The most prominent representative of this "new" kind of biography is Gamaliel Bradford. He is not, however, a Freudian, but a sane, temperate, laboriously trained writer who has a profound regard for facts, great industry in unearthing them, and much skill in serving them daintily and appetisingly, seasoned with fancy, to the reading public. Mr. Harvey O'Higgins has swallowed the doctrines of the Viennese mystic, bait, line and sinker, and in *The American Mind in Action* he has attempted to show how well he has digested and

assimilated them. A journalist by training, he has mastered the Freudian jargon, and he writes it with the same ease that James Joyce writes of the subconscious distillation and conscious crystallisation of Mr. and Mrs. Bloom. He is the Técla of biographers, but he offers his goods to the trade as genuine. They do not deceive experts. He is attempting to do for biographies what Dr. George M. Gould did a few years ago in his biographical clinics. Only he substituted the Œdipus-complex for Eye Strain.

Œdipus Redivivus will have a longer day in court than Eye Strain had and more spectators, and there is a salaciousness about the testimony elicited that the elicitors and the audience like, but the verdict in both cases will be similar.

A form of biography that is apparently finding great favour is represented by such books as *The Divine Lady, Ariel, The Portrait of Zélide, The Nightingale, Glorious Apollo.* It is an elaboration of the variety popularised by Mr. Gamaliel Bradford which he calls psychographs. These are psychographs and somagraphs flavoured with time-denatured scandal. They are easy reading, mildly instructive, and moderately diverting. They are a good substitute for fiction and a fairly acceptable one for history, and they are infinitely to be preferred to biographic fiction such as *He Was a Man,* the life of Jack London, by Rose Wilder Lane.

They do things differently in France, and to point out the difference between their point of view and ours in most matters that have to do with artistic or literary manifestations, is not to show partisanship for either side. But books like *Ariel, The Divine Lady, Zélide,* must be admitted to be nothing more nor less than tales of love, under guise of historical veracity. This pretence soothes the sense of decorum of the American public which would be outraged if the books were openly and unreservedly published as "romances." The French adopt the opposite policy. And one of the most respectable and ancient publishing houses in Paris has recently commissioned several

prominent authors to write the biographies of the "loves" of great historical characters. The series opened with Marcelle Tinayre's *La Vie Amoureuse de Madame de Pompadour,* and continued with that of *Talma,* by André Antoine; *Louis XIV,* by his great biographer, Louis Bertrand; *Casanova,* by the coming great poet, Maurice Rostand; and *Marceline Desbordes-Valmore,* by the Goncourt Academician, Lucien Descaves. The amorous life of *Joséphine* has also appeared, written in the delightful style and sensitive vein of Gérard d'Houville, the wife of Henri de Régnier. More are coming, and they all bear the general name of *Leurs Amours.* It is a new sort of biography which is bound to be popular. Although it might be misunderstood in this country, it is not in France where love and lovers are not taboo, even when they concern great characters. These books purposely neglect historical facts, except insofar as they relate to the love-lives of their subjects or as they are necessary to the guidance of the reader. The object of the series is to portray various personages solely in their relation to love; and, so far, the experiment has been successful.

The Portrait of Zélide, by Geoffrey Scott, is the best fictional biography that has been published in English. It is the story of an eighteenth century Dutch belle, Isabelle Van Tuyll, who, after she married her brother's tutor, Monsieur de Charrière, developed a reputation for wit, wilfulness and culture that extended far beyond her native or her adopted country. She had the artistic temperament associated with unusual intellectual endowment, remarkable facility of expression and a great fascination for men. A friendly critic told her that she wrote better than any one known to him, not even excepting Voltaire; and Sainte-Beuve, the greatest critic of the day, said that she had the "authentic tongue of Versailles." She wrote a brief description of herself which she called "The Portrait of Zélide," and which, as literary self-portraiture, has rarely been surpassed:

"Compassionate in temper and liberal by inclination, Zélide is patient only on principle; when she is indulgent and easy, be grateful to her, for it costs her an effort. When she prolongs her civility with people she holds in small esteem, redouble your admiration: she is in torture. Vain at first by nature, her vanity has become boundless; knowledge and scorn of mankind soon perfected that quality. Yet, this vanity is excessive even to her own taste. She already thinks that fame is worth nothing at the cost of happiness, and yet she would make many an effort for fame.

"Would you like to know if Zélide is beautiful, or pretty, or merely passable? I can not tell; it all depends on whether one loves her, or on whether she wishes to make herself be loved. She has a beautiful neck, and displays it at some sacrifice to modesty.

"Excessively emotional, and not less fastidious, she can not be happy either with or without love. Perceiving herself too sensitive to be happy, she has almost ceased to aspire to happiness and has devoted herself to goodness. She thus escapes repentance and seeks only for diversion.

"Can you not guess her secret? Zélide is somewhat sensuous. Emotions too vivid and too intense for her organism, and exaggerated activity without any satisfying object, these are the sources of all her misfortunes. With less sensibility, Zélide would have had the mind of a great man; with less intelligence, she would have been only a weak woman."

Sensuous she may have been, but sex never clamoured very loudly for appeasement. Her emotions were too vivid and intense for her organism and she lived in perpetual warfare with herself. Profoundly egotistic she delighted in revealing herself. Her self-esteem did not permit her to soften a defect or enhance a quality. In spite of her egotism she gave out more than she received because of her abounding vitality of mind and body. Her early love affairs were purely cerebral—indeed all of them were until she met Benjamin Constant. She married without love, because her mind told her that having reached the age of twenty-eight it would be unwise to delay. Monsieur Hermenches, an older man, was her first friend—

one could scarcely call him lover. He had had success with women, but she could not accept a master. When she was twenty-three she met Boswell and for nine months she amused herself at his expense. He was so assured of his own charm that he believed Zélide was in love with him, and if he could reform her, he intended to marry her. But Zélide had no desire or intention to reform. After endeavouring in vain to support the boredom of life at Colombier, whither she had gone with her conventional and unemotional husband, she became ill and was sent to Paris for a change. There she met Benjamin Constant, the nephew of her early friend Hermenches. He was twenty, she was forty-seven. The attraction was mutual and immediate; disparity of years was ignored; they spoke a common language and felt that they had each found an *alter ego*. Constant, despite a most unattractive exterior, appears to have made powerful appeal to women; during his long association with Zélide, he had many *amours* of which she was cognisant. They did not arouse in her the slightest feeling of jealousy. She feared only intellectual rivalry. Her love affair with Constant lasted many years and was interrupted and finally shattered by the advent of Madame de Staël. Constant was unable to withstand Madame de Staël. Possibly he was tired of being completely understood and may have craved the companionship of some one who would idealise him. He met her at the psychological moment. Her strong personality, combined with great sensuality, attracted him and obscured her limitations. There was not room in his heart and mind for two women and Zélide had to give way. She accepted the situation quietly and reasonably, but never recovered.

Her death was tragic for she realised that she had failed to accomplish that which she had set out to do. She was a great character to whom truth made a profound appeal. Illusions and shams were abhorrent to her. She showed this in her dispassionate description of herself; her power of separating herself from her subject is extraordinary. Above all her predi-

lections, she sought reality. In a world where the majority prefer illusions, it was difficult for her to find congeniality. For a while she believed that she found it in Benjamin Constant but it was transitory. She died alone, solitary in death as she had been in life.

Some day a psychologist will explain why the artistic temperament is inimical to happiness. Madame de Charrière had health, beauty, charm, wealth, a complaisant husband, an ardent lover, an indulgent conscience and withal ability which was loudly applauded and remotely echoed, but she was not happy. Perhaps she would not have gone all the way with Anatole France who said that he had never had a happy day in his life, but she would know just what he meant to convey.

Beauty, fame, love and riches are seldom synonymous with happiness. The case of Zélide is only one instance of the truth of this statement; she has sisters in all races, in all times, and Yang Kuei-Fei, whom Mrs. Shu-Chiung introduces to Western civilisation under the name of *The Most Famous Beauty of China,* is another of those whom the gods loved and tortured.

Then there is the form of biography that is not a portrait of the soul or of the body, nor is it exactly fictional biography. It stands midway between the psychographed and the idealised life. A conspicuous practitioner of this branch of art is Meade Minnigerode. He calls his latest book *Lives and Times, Four Informal American Biographies.*

Mr. Minnigerode has at his service a keen—almost too keen—fictional sense. He seems to have less regard for truth and facts than for incidentals that make a good picture and enhance a story; and in his painstaking and careful selection of material, he uses only whatever assists him in building characters and situations. He has searched not so much for that which reveals character as motives in higher relief. As a result, we know less accurately what the four characters really were, than what Mr. Minnigerode thought they were—

almost what he thought it would be interesting for them to be.

The book, however, is convincing and that may be its greatest danger. Whatever one's cool judgment may be, it carries; and this success is probably due to the many vivid scenes and to the clever, if not profound or necessarily true, characterisations.

Lives and Times will delight most persons who are interested in early New York, because it is an attempt to do for that City what Dickens did for London. "That funny little town" as it first appeared to Jumel, and Philadelphia where Citizen Genêt suffered, are described in all their arrogance, pathos, bustle and absurdity. And it is done with neither sympathy nor indulgence, but with a smart dart which pricks through every page. No one very young and no one very old should read it. The young are too prone to look lightly on the generally respected portions of society, and the old would be angered. But most of all, no one without a sense of humour should read it; and to a sense of humour must be added perspective and a knowledge of the writing motives of the day. Let him read it who will not take it too seriously. Such an one will be entertained and will acquire a feeling for the seethe and churn and moil of the early days of the Republic which will be a real addition to his sense of what early America was —or may well have been—if it was as interesting as all that.

Yet, Mr. Minnigerode's book does not contribute to the sum total of our knowledge of human personality, and that because it does not get behind the scenes; the whole action is played on the footlights and no preparation is ever visible. Characters must take their place in the scenery and are so overwhelmed with the details of the machinery that they fade from the picture. They are lost in their time. The author had a chance to work out the drives and conflicts going on back stage in the mind of Aaron Burr, for instance. But he neglected it; little is added to our real sense of what the man was. We know how he met situations, but not why. We know what he

seemed to desire, but we never touch the spring of that desire. And the same thing is true of Theodosia. The picture is always charming and rendered with delightful observations and turns of expression. But none of the questions that rush to our mind as we read of her are answered. Her death is moving; yet we are stirred not by the loss of a character we have known, but merely by the disappearance of one whom we have seen move gracefully across the page.

And the other two characters, William Eaton and Genêt seem even less real. The study of Jumel is the most penetrating of the biographies, though it may be the most blameworthy from the point of view of the "gossip urge in man." But at least the man becomes real and known, and we can appreciate the strange loyalty that bound him to his own destruction. He holds together, grows and develops, reaches the climax of his own possibilities and goes down to an end which is convincing. There is a picture of desolation in his solitude which is a literary contribution if not strictly a biographical one.

It is not entirely just to Mr. George S. Hellman to put his biography of *Washington Irving* in the category defined for Mr. Minnigerode's book, but it fits there more accurately than elsewhere. It is laden with personalities and generously interspersed with gossip; particularly about Irving's love affairs, perhaps the most interesting thing in the world about which to gossip and to conjecture: "It seems perhaps a cruel thing to say, but I am convinced that if Mathilda Hoffman had lived, the man of letters that the world of literature knows as Washington Irving would never have come into being." Perhaps "cruel" is not the most felicitous adjective that the author might have used. No doubt many will find Mr. Hellman's interpretation of Irving's amativeness very entertaining, but it will scarcely add anything to his reputation as the greatest pioneer of American literature.

Mr. Hellman says, "The present volume has been called 'Washington Irving, Esq.,' and it is in the life of a great and

lovable gentleman that we are far more interested than in the easily ascertainable achievement of the writer whose works have long been the subject of critical evaluation." If he had added to this that he had also wanted to give Irving's first biographer, his nephew, a black eye, and to include a lot of letters which Irving had written from Spain, chiefly to the State Department, it would have been a perfect description of the motive for writing the book.

There are so many recent biographies that fall short of the ideal that it would seem prejudiced distinction to make mention of one and to point out with some specificity its shortcomings. But Mr. Ernest Brennecke, Jr., had an unusual opportunity, an inspiring subject, and a waiting public for his work. His *Life of Thomas Hardy* must be reckoned a failure. The reader who can glean a concept of the personality of the famous English novelist and poet, whom George Moore has recently derided, from Mr. Brennecke's book has great perspicacity. The narrative itself is clumsily composed and awkwardly arranged; the material obtained from personal contact with Mr. Hardy is used maladroitly; gossip, anecdote and puerile information clog the wheel of the story; and the backgrounds of "origins" and "The Soil" take up nearly a third of the volume. In a foreword, the author says, "There is little spice and perhaps too little story in this book." I would not say so, but there is too little style, substance and sequence; too much irrelevancy and not enough form and finality. If Mr. Brennecke had given to Mr. Strachey one of the ten years that he devoted to Mr. Hardy he might have written a more acceptable book.

The picture of Thomas Hardy which I should prefer to keep is neither that which George Moore has slashed irreverently nor that which Mr. Brennecke has muddled with too much reverence, but that traced by James Barrie in his famous rectorial address: "The pomp and circumstance of war will pass, and all others now alive may fade from the scene, but I think

the quiet figure of Hardy will live on." As an antidote, I suggest to those who have not found Dr. F. A. Hedgcock's *Thomas Hardy* sufficiently informative and appreciative that they read the chapter entitled "The Builders" in Miss M. P. Willocks' recent book called *Between the Old World and the New.*

Another biography which should be discouraged is *James Elroy Flecker,* by his friend Douglas Goldring. Critics of poetry who fulfil all the requirements set forth in Flecker's Essay on "The Public as Art Critic" say that he has a permanent place in English literature. We should like to forget that his obscenity amounted to a gift; that one of Mrs. Peachum's many descendants taunted him at a dinner party that his swarthiness would succumb to "soap and water" and that he thought our boys should not neglect the *Cortigiano;* whether he had one or several moustaches during his early manhood does not seem to be essential for our understanding of his emotions or our comprehension of his intellectual remains.

Flecker was a champion of beauty. One who knows him only from his friend's "appreciation" could scarcely believe it.

For years Henry Fairfield Osborn, a distinguished naturalist of New York, has been publishing a variety of biography somewhat after the manner of the "Roadmakers" series of Small, Maynard and Co. It deserves praise and imitation. *Impressions of Great Naturalists* are made up of reminiscences of Darwin, Huxley, Cope and other great men with whom he was once intimate. Each verbal portrait is prefaced by a brief legend which summarises the author's relationship to, or contact with, the subject.

Professor Osborn does not attempt to portray the whole man but a principal aspect of each life, and as such aspect is always pleasant and inspiring, he has only praise for his subjects. Some will find him too laudatory, too uncritical. But he maintains with the French author that if love is blind, friendship will not see faults; and when friendship is engendered by the

admiration and veneration that every one should have for such benefactors of science, petty faults of life and trifling defects of nature are forgotten.

Thus we read of the superiority of Francis Balfour, of the impression he gave of living "in a higher atmosphere, in another dimension of intellectual space" and of the great lessons of the balanced daily life he gave to his disciples. We learn that Thomas Huxley had a delightful sense of humour, combined with a spirit of sacrifice to education which gained him popularity and gratitude. Mr. Osborn draws an interesting contrast between John Burroughs and John Muir who had in common their Christian names, their love of nature and "to a certain extent, their powers of expression"; but they were unlike in almost every other respect; and their variations are attributed to racial differences. The author's studies of ethnology make him competent to feel the influence of race and of blood, and he applies his knowledge to understanding of the soul.

The best sketch in the book is that of Pasteur, "the greatest benefactor of mankind since the time of Jesus Christ," in which love is as visible as admiration.

Similar commendation may be given to the series of biographies now being published by Henry Holt & Co., called *Writers of the Day.* They have the rare merit of brevity and they are done by authors who know how to write; one of the recent issues, *Bernard Shaw,* by Edward Shanks fulfils nearly every requirement of biography. It does not dwell upon the facts or data of his life, the scenery surrounding his boyhood home, his self-imposed dietetic restrictions or his partiality for the Automobile Club, but it does throw an illuminating light on the character, personality and intimate thoughts of the extraordinary man who has courage, understanding and humour.

Ivor Brown was not so successful in his presentation of a man who has been up to his chin in the life of his time, because he pitched his song of praise in too high a key. H. G.

Wells has diverted many and instructed some, but few will agree that when Woodrow Wilson lost his sovereignty over the minds of men, it was transferred in no small measure to him who would rather be called journalist than artist.

The accolade must be given to a Bishop. William Lawrence has written one of the best biographies that have appeared in America for many a year. His subject is Henry Cabot Lodge, a life-long friend. It fulfils all the requirements of biographical writings, and it does more: it gives a picture of the author: big heart, good mind, simple, sincere, sympathetic, and above all tolerant and understanding. And the picture of Lodge! With paint a Velasquez might rival it. It gives his intellectual and emotional measurements, his compulsions and restraints; his possessions and his limitations in just the way a priest should know how to reveal them.

The student and general reader who want to learn about Samuel Butler should turn to his own books, and especially to *Alps and Sanctuaries, Luck or Cunning,* rather than to Mr. Jones' ponderous biography. In the former, Butler is to be seen as he was in the flesh, whimsical and wise, cranky and crabbed, sensitive to beauty but fearful of betraying it, arrogant in characterisation but weak in manner, urbane in speech and demure in looks. Painfully aggressive himself, he loathed aggressiveness in others and could not abide in his fellows the quality that he possessed so abundantly: cleverness. He prided himself that he was like the priests in the Sanctuary of S. Michelo, "perfectly tolerant and ready to extend to others the consideration they expected themselves," but he was as unlike them as any one imaginable. He had a first-class double-track mind, and although he lacked heart, he had humour.

Demand unquestionably governs, in some measure, supply in biographic literature. There would not be so many lives of prize-fighters, "screen artists," singers and actors of a day's reputation if publishers did not have a market for them, or if experience had not taught writers that the public is keen to

hear the details of their lives. Biographies pander to the urge that is so important to our progress and welfare: curiosity. They ward off the poisoned arrows of ennui, and they prevent the shells of boredom from exploding. Practically all biographies and autobiographies are of individuals who have "succeeded" or "arrived." Men who make failures of their lives rarely have their biographies written. It is to be regretted, for they would be helpful. We learn more from our mistakes than from our ten strikes.

When the dominant determination of man seems to be to speed up life so that we can do, or have done for us, in a day what formerly took a month, it seems paradoxical that biography should continue to be what Mr. Lytton Strachey says it is: "Two fat volumes with which it is our custom to commemorate the day—who does not know them, with their ill-digested masses of material, their slip-shod style, their love of tedious panegyric, their lamentable lack of selection, of detachment, of design?" Biographies have fallen so far behind the bandwagon of progress that their makers can not even hear the music. We should like to have our boys know about Willard Straight, but it is too much to expect that they should read a ponderous volume of six hundred pages to find out about the making of a young American, even though he was a credit to his country. It is not fair to the boy, and it is unjust to Miguel Cervantes. And much as one might like to travel through Asia and Africa with A. Savage Landor, his two fat volumes make one's eyes turn lovingly to the thin, caressable *Religio Medici* or to the latest novel of Sheila Kaye-Smith. The great biographies, are they not very long? They are, and that is the pity of it. No one reads them now save a few bookworms and those who became acquainted with them before tabloid nutriment was discovered.

Biography must be reformed, first in length, and then in substance. What most of those now rolling off the presses need is form and brevity. The man whose picture can not be painted with a hundred thousand words does not exist.

II

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Human life is not to be estimated by what men perform, but by what they are."

J. A. Symonds.

IT is generally accepted that the relation which exists between autobiography and biography is so close that so far as purpose and quality of form and subject are concerned, the words are interchangeable; that is to say, the average person thinks the unique difference between the two is that one is written in the first person, the other in the third. No greater mistake could be made. One is first hand information, the other second, or even third. As Trudeau puts it: to recount the actions of another is not biography, it is zoology. Both have points in common, as all works of art must be founded on art and beauty, but the qualities that make biography great are not those that autobiography needs to achieve perfection.

In the first place, the chief merit of autobiography is to be found in veracity and sincerity; these qualities are more important than style or grammar. One of the most illuminating autobiographies of recent years is *The Letters of Olive Schreiner;* they are as devoid of style and as disdainful of grammar as an apache is of culture. Biography on the other hand must display literary qualities which are not indispensable in autobiography, provided truth is absolute. Cellini's *Memoirs* which, in its original edition, showed the lack of literary culture of its author, is nevertheless one of the greatest books of its kind. It is not only the story of a man, it is the history of his time. Such a man and such times! If the style

of the writing had been perfected by its admirable translator, it would have lost much of its charm. If the same style had been used by Boswell in his *Life of Samuel Johnson,* no amount of veracity and of sincerity would have redeemed it. We think of biographers as "littérateurs," but there has never been a great biographer who was not a great artist. Autobiographers have something to say or to give to the world in the manner they know best.

The biographer must be objective; he must be able to perceive quickly, to understand readily, to grasp, gather and evaluate facts, to fuse his material into a homogeneous mass, to stamp it with style, and mix with his literary qualities a certain amount of hero-worship. Self-consciousness has no place in his work; he may efface himself as much as he wishes, and recent biographies have proved that the more he does it, the greater his achievement.

To use a well-known and often told legend, the biographer may be compared to the swan which Ariosto believed to be gliding on the surface of the river Lethe—the river for which Byron sighed and to which he called in one of his poems. Ariosto's theory was that when man comes to the end of his life, Death cuts the thread. At the end of that thread is a medal which Time throws in the waters of the Lethe, where it disappears. Occasionally, it falls on a passing swan and nestles between its wings. Gracefully and swiftly the swan carries it to a temple where it is kept for ever. The swan of the allegory is the biographer who, by gathering the deeds and characteristics of his subject, carries them to immortality.

The autobiographer, on the other hand, must be subjective above all. His glance and his attention must be turned on himself; his critical powers and his gift of observation must be directed on his own character. As John Addington Symonds truthfully said: "Autobiographies written with a purpose are likely to want atmosphere." A man when he sits down to give an account of his own life, from the point of view of art or

accomplishment, passion or a particular action is apt to make it appear as though he were nothing but an artist, lover, reformer, or as though the action he seeks to explain were the principal event of his existence. To paint a true portrait, he must supplement the bare facts of his existence. He must reveal himself emotionally as well as intellectually. It is the emotional revelation that gives atmosphere to his story. Naturally such "atmosphere" should not exclude a certain amount of objectivity; if the writer is too introspective, his memoirs may prove stimulating and illuminating for the student of behaviour, but will scarcely interest the general reader who is not content with deductive and inductive ratiocination, but wants action mixed with sentiment.

The biographer is not a judge, but a witness; the autobiographer may be both. The former should have no preconceived idea of his hero. His efforts should be concentrated on presenting him to posterity as he appeared to his contemporaries, to himself and to those among whom he lived, acted, enjoyed and suffered. Such restrictions can not be imposed on the autobiographer who has a much wider field in which to push his investigations on personality; whatever he chooses to say or reveal must be accepted at its face value, and his judgment upon himself must be impersonal—and there are no judgments so fallacious as self-judgments. Biographies should study both sides of an individual; what he did and what he was, since his notions are determined by his personality characteristics; autobiographies need not deal with achievements which, if they are worth while, make their own publicity; the stress should be placed on the manifestation of personality—on motives, passions, experiences, failures, and accomplishments.

Long before it was the fashion as it is to-day to write the biography of men during their lifetime Voltaire said: "We owe consideration to the living; to the dead we owe truth only." He foresaw with remarkable keenness the danger of such

endeavour; and to-day, overwhelmed with biographies of living subjects, we deplore the fashion. There are certain truths that no one likes to be told, but that is what we must insist upon from the biographical art: truth, and more truth. Man is not big enough to look at his contemporaries without partiality, and he must allow a voice to his likes and dislikes. For instance, it would have been as unwise for Mr. Alexander Woollcott to write anything in his biography of Irving Berlin that might have made the composer appear in a light less brilliant than that of semi-genius, as it would be for a newspaper editor to write articles against the policy of his newspaper. We must agree with Sir Sidney Lee that "no man has ever proven to be fit subject for biography until he is dead."

Finally the main difference between autobiography and biography, a difference which is a *résumé* of these reflections, is that the former works from within outwards, while the latter works from without inwards; and the autobiographer is successful only in proportion to the self-absorption he reveals; his is a selfish and personal work. The biographer, on the other hand, is successful only in proportion to the self-effacement he shows.

Amiel is perhaps the best example of introspection that can be found in a diarist, as Proust is of the novelist. They and Barbellion, the author of *The Journal of a Disappointed Man,* lived within themselves, and the outside world was for them merely an abiding place. A contrast of great interest could be drawn between Amiel, Cellini and Rousseau. Amiel's diary would be a model of introspection, Cellini would head the list of Memoir writers whose principal quality is to be found in the wholesomeness of their objectivity. He was no student of inner nature. Life for him was a great battle-field, where one could garner beauty and trophies, achieve triumphs of art, and at the same time kill those who stood in the way; Jean-Jacques would hold a place between these two; he sought interior motives and the explanation of his sentiments, but the

life he led was not especially conducive to reasoning and internal debate. So his *Confessions* are as far above those of Cellini as above the *Journal of Amiel,* in quality, in form and in subject, and are still the best example of autobiography that has ever been published.

Facts are as necessary to autobiography as they are to biography. Even when they are tampered with, as Marie Bashkirtseff tampered with those of her life, they have their importance and interest and nothing that is true should be allowed to remain in the darkness. Olive Schreiner wrote, "There can be no absolutely true life of any one except written by themselves and then only if written for the eye of God." Marie did not write hers for the eye of God, but it is the closest approach to a true life since Jean-Jacques'.

If a life is worth writing at all, no consideration of personal feeling or convention should deter the writer from setting down the facts; for on them truth, the greatest quality of art, is founded. Marie's *Journal* is a work of art in the full sense of the word; it reveals a soul and a personality, it shows the extraordinary gift of its youthful author for writing, painting and music, but it also shows the disequilibrium of an imagination untutored and untrained.

It is doubtful if any Anglo-Saxon will ever parallel the feat of Cellini, of Rousseau, of Bashkirtseff. There is a vein of reticence in the emotional nature of the Anglo-Saxon that the publicity drill can not penetrate, save in exceptional instances and even then the hole is never large enough to permit the implantation of sufficient dynamite to explode both the conscious and the unconscious, and thus reveal the entire personality. The autobiographies of these three did reveal the entire personalities of their authors. Marie Bashkirtseff's *Journal,* though fictional in execution, impresses the reader as containing more forced draught, than Cellini's or Rousseau's. Marie is romanticism itself and her imagination is the battleground on which there is a perpetual struggle between the real and the

fanciful. Early in life she created a picture of herself and her ambition was to live up to it to the end. Reality was not æsthetical for her, and life without the æsthetic element was not tolerable, so she set up a stage and as she was to be the central figure upon it, she must be the most eloquent, the most colourful part, the undeniable centre of attention. She could accomplish her object only by distorting facts and by weaving around herself situations which are highly improbable, but which are self-revelatory despite their distortion.

Her desire was for fame and her cast of mind made the sham, the mediocre, the ordinary things of life as hateful to her as beef gruel is to one whose taste turns naturally and by cultivation to chartreuse. She was equal to her desire, and her mental keenness and her emotional avidity demanded material which would satisfy her. Not always finding it in her surroundings, she created it and made it part of herself.

She displayed mental hunger early in life and sought to find the thing that would appease it. Through her literary interest and tastes, which were the result of thought and not of ready-made judgment, Marie reveals her mental life—a conscious life and yet unconscious. She is forever reaching toward a goal which will fulfil her intellectual hopes, and in the effort of reaching she improved her mind, added to her artistic talent and enlarged her vision. The reader who accompanies her in her journey through life must feel the restlessness of her youth, the sincerity of her demand for death rather than nonentity, the tragedy of her soul too big for her body. The inequalities and contradictions of her character could never be brought into harmony, and finally the soul won. But it is not the Marie of whom one reads that is convincing, but the creator of that Marie—just as any writer, when he shows himself as the force behind his characters—is more real than these characters.

Behind all her stage settings, her literary effects, her hunger for fame and her conscious effort to act always as one would in public, and a carefully chosen public at that—there is the writer

tense, at times bored, restless, enthusiastic and depressed, giving a picture of herself, of her own sublimely dissatisfied spirit. The picture is successful in its large lines and in its small details; it reveals a mentality more than an existence, but all Marie's real life was lived unseen by the eye, and nothing would really be true of her that did not take its source and find its origin in her unconscious self.

Some parts of her *Journal* are essentially biographical, and they are not the most entertaining parts. She writes with sincerity and quietness of the period which she devoted almost exclusively to work and painting; she was real enough in those days, but we miss the Marie who was neither peaceful nor fulfilled. We still feel, when we see her at rest or when we see her at work before her easel, the bond of æsthetic achievement between the creator and the created, between the writer and the Marie of the *Journal;* but we miss the charm of the Marie who flirts, dances, goes to balls where she looks like a Greuze shepherdess, who captivates every man and outshines every woman in the world.

Her response to life is such that we find it in every one of her moods: whether she is romantic, analytical, hysterical or self-possessed, she is always in a mood which is responsive to life and ready to give all she possessed to life. All she demanded, in reality, was constant change; no continuity of feeling or of sentiment was satisfying to her; joy was sorrow if long and level; sorrow barbed with keenness was joy, ". . . him whose strenuous tongue can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;" Marie the writer is expressed in this sentence; pain was welcome if it carried sharp sensations in its trend, if it gave her a life more full and heady, foaming from the cup.

Her idea of love was as imaginary and as unreal as her conception of life; no one but Marie could have been contented with the picture she made of her emotional response to love. She darted through her adolescent years rapidly and yet pro-

foundly; she thought she knew all she was to know about love before she had had much teaching; her instinct and her intuition prompted her, inspired her conduct and decided her actions. Her susceptibility to impressions was such that on them she based her knowledge, and her flair for the dramatic and the unreal made her prostrate herself before the tall, blond phantom, and pretend to herself that this was love in its sublimest and most convincing expression. She reveals herself as completely in her dealings with love, as she does in her fierce demand for life; this demand became more and more tenacious as death came nearer, and her revolt and her despair as the final hour approached were coupled with the sense of futility that made it almost welcome. She asked herself the poignant questions that have troubled and upset mankind since its creation: she suffered the inevitable struggle between spiritual hope and intellectual denial. What has it all meant, and where is God? These questions were not to be answered; if her genius was nothing but a spent shadow, what was it? and why not prefer death to it? Strangely troubling questions to a young mind. Marie was one of those about whom Stephen Phillips wrote:

> "The departing sun his glory owes
> To the eternal thoughts of creatures brief
> Who think the thing that they shall never see."

The present generation has produced three extraordinary autobiographies in the guise of fiction: James Joyce's was entitled, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* Dorothy Richardson called hers *Pointed Roofs,* and Marcel Proust's is included in *A La Recherche Du Temps Perdu,* which extends through several volumes, two of which, *Swann's Way* and *The Guermantes Way,* have been translated into English.

They are valuable documents, for they set forth with great frankness the awareness and the development of consciousness,

and the interplay of what is now called the unconscious and the conscious mind. Proust's is the most elaborate and detailed, and when we shall have it in its entirety, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Confessions* may no longer be rated the greatest autobiography in existence. These books have had detailed consideration in *The Doctor Looks at Literature.*

Introspection and confession are unpopular to-day in this country. They do not fit the times. Man is so busy acting that he has little time for thinking, and if time were vouchsafed him, he would not have the inclination. If one needed proof of it the legislators of Tennessee could furnish it. This disinclination to thought and reflection may be one of the reasons why this country has furnished few great autobiographies. Another is that until recently we have been bound by tradition of reticence and we have always found self-estimation difficult. When Walt Whitman broke the convention and put a premium on himself we were outraged. Our reticence was a manifestation of self-consciousness incident to our youth and inexperience. The American autobiographies of recent years that came nearest to being satisfactory are *The Education of Henry Adams* and *The Life of Doctor Trudeau,* though Andrew Carnegie's story of his life fulfilled some requirements. Had the second half of Henry Adams' book kept the pace set by the first, it would likely be called the most satisfactory autobiography of the century. But the account of his life after 1900 shows occasional bewilderment, frequent discursiveness, and an inclination to profitless speculation. Henry Adams was a singularly sane individual, free from ancestor-worship; neither beholden to convention nor enslaved by tradition and environment; a potential antinomian of artistic temperament who devoted his life studiously to self-education from which he deduced a dynamic theory of history and an amorphous one of education. The account of his childhood and youth, of his early environment; of the people with whom he came into casual and intimate contact; of his attitude to-

ward and his reactions to formal education, is an unusually brilliant personality study. His pilgrimages in search of knowledge to Germany, Italy and France and his experiences as a diplomat in England are precious human documents. It is doubtful whether any American has ever seen the English with clearer eye, and commented on their characteristics with rarer judgment than he did in the chapters "Foes or Friends" and "Eccentricity."

The Education of Henry Adams is not only a revelation of a personality, a brilliant example of self-analysis; it is a treasure house of comment on and estimate of scores of individuals who wrote their names more or less large in their time. If a better description of Henry Cabot Lodge was ever written I have not encountered it, and any one who knew Theodore Roosevelt will admit that he merited this characterisation, "he more than any other man living within the range of notoriety, showed the singular primitive quality that belongs to ultimate matter—the quality that mediæval theology assigned to God—he was pure act."

No student of American history can escape study of this Memoir; no one interested in behaviour will neglect it; and no one seeking instruction and entertainment can afford to overlook it. Henry Adams is Boston's asset that Washington made permanent.

Dr. Edward L. Trudeau had a powerful personality and his book reveals it. Fearlessness vied with honesty to be the predominant feature of his nature and the closing lines of one of Browning's most popular poems, sung in his heart:

"With their triumphs and their glories, and the rest;
Love is best."

Seized early in life with the disease that he did so much to make conquerable, he laboured for forty years burdened and often prostrated, in the Adirondack wilderness, and founded

there a health centre which radiates his influence throughout the world and which will perpetuate his name.

Dr. Trudeau had an unusual gift, and he had it to an extraordinary degree: the gift of friendship. He had exceptional power to attract people to him, to interest them in his work, and in his play. He not only attracted them, but enticed them to participation whether it was building a church, equipping a laboratory or outwitting a fox. For a quarter of a century, he radiated a benign, salutary influence throughout the North Woods, and in the latter years of his life throughout the whole country. He spoked the wheel of the juggernaut tuberculosis as few save Koch have done. His presence inspirited thousands bending beneath their burden; his courage heartened even a greater number; and his conduct inspired countless colleagues who were working at the very problem he sought to solve.

He knew the ingredients that one must have to make life a success; he knew the amount of work and play, love and worship which must be used and he knew how to blend them to make them acceptable to the eye and to the palate; but what he knew best of all was that man can not live by bread alone. Any one who does not know it may learn from the least egotistic of autobiographies.

The most readable of recent autobiographies is Maurice Francis Egan's *Recollections of a Happy Life*. But it is not a self-revelatory book. One gets vistas of life in Philadelphia as educated middle-class Catholics lived it three generations ago, glimpses of the society that politicians and a few men of letters made in Washington, a generation or two ago; and one gets the distinctive and agreeable literary and bohemian atmosphere of New York at about the same time. There are scores of pictures of people, famous and infamous, interesting and commonplace, and these pictures vary from trifling vignettes to carefully drawn and finished Gibsons. To justify the word infamous it is only necessary to remind that Egan was Minis-

ter to Copenhagen when Dr. Cook sold that government a gold brick. Egan knew every one; most of them he liked and they all liked him, Matthew Arnold excepted. After they had passed on and he had entered another field of activity, he re-invoked for his diversion the memories of the first half of his mature life and jotted them down. "God had given him memory so that he might have roses in December." He was arranging and ordering them when his call came, but despite the fact that he did not have opportunity to finish them, they are charming and entertaining.

But the reader must be what is called very psychic who can understand the personality of Maurice Egan from his autobiography. The average reader will gather that he was cheerful, charming, courteous, companionable, kindly, generous, urbane—perhaps even a little vain. But these are secondary virtues of prime importance mostly acquirable. He had the cardinal virtues too: he had a good conscience and the urge to assist and benefit others was greater than personal ambition. He was gifted socially and intellectually; he was lucky and he had as much money as a poet should have. He escaped the accident called disease most successfully; he had a host of friends and he never put them to torture by asking them what they thought of his reviews or of his poems. Small wonder he had a happy life, and that now when it has taken other display, his work continues to contribute to the happiness of others.

Most autobiographies are written by individuals of artistic temperament: musicians, painters, actors, clergymen, whose conspicuous possession, after talent, is self-confidence which the average person often interprets as conceit. There are few better ways of obtaining a comprehensive idea of what is called the artistic temperament than reading such an autobiography, and the *Life of Hector Berlioz,* whose fame as a parent of music seems to be permanently established, is as good as any. Berlioz was weird, contradictory, unreasoning, improvident, impulsive, selfish, jealous, egocentric, amorous and

inconstant. He was devoid of humour and he lacked all religious feeling. He was intemperate of speech and of strength. Despite all these he gained and kept the affection and esteem of many of the great men of his time. His book can scarcely be called an autobiography, although he planned it to be one. He gives the bare facts of his life up to the time he abandoned medicine for music, but after that, one must gain knowledge of his character and personality from his letters. They reveal them as no formal autobiography could, for here are his thoughts, feelings, aspirations and disappointments; his selfishness, shallowness, fickleness and unreasonableness; here is the record of his punishment by his disposition and disease. They show what a handicap to happiness such a temperament is. Any one who thinks of choosing parents from musicians should read the letters. Any one who doubts the existence of Dante's Beatrice or Petrarch's Laura should also read them, for Estelle Fournier was their sister.

A man of Berlioz's temperament should not be judged according to any standard but his own; his soul was too sensitive to radiate happiness; his genius was of too fine a nature to leave place in him for self-appreciation and optimism; his tempers revealed his weariness of life and the extent to which life had conquered him; or rather they would in any one but Berlioz whose personality could suffer no comparison. M. Romain Rolland has attempted a parallel between Wagner and Berlioz—all the advantage of the former if common measures are adopted, but strangely contrasting in favour of Berlioz if we compare his solitude, his unceasing pain and "unspeakable weariness" to "the spectacle of Wagner, wrapped in silk and furs, surrounded by flattery and luxury, pouring unction upon his own soul."

The artistic temperament and the reformatory or uplift-urge are antipodal. Those who possess the latter often write their lives. They are sometimes instructive, rarely interesting; as an example of this class, I select the *Autobiography of Harriet*

Martineau who, after Mary Wollstonecraft, was the first doughty champion of "Rights of Women." Florence Nightingale said of her that she was born to be a destroyer of slavery. It is an important historical document of social evolution in England, and it serves as the perfect example of what an autobiography should be, and should not be. In twelve pages appended to the two fat volumes, the author makes an estimate of herself and of her work which is quite ideal, but the descriptions of her nonsensical and childish recollections scattered through the first volume are fatiguing, and pages of irrelevant, inconsequent matter spoil the second. Withal, the work is interesting and will always remain so because of the brilliant thumb sketches it contains of famous persons, such as Margaret Fuller, Carlyle, Coleridge, Malthus, Macaulay and dozens of others; and because of the light it throws on what has come to be called psychotherapy.

When Miss Martineau was approaching what Rose Macaulay calls the dangerous age, she experienced a serious nervous breakdown. She found plenty of doctors, apparently, to tell her she would not recover. One meets them in literature so often and so rarely in the flesh! She contracted the opium habit and to cure that she consulted a mesmerist. He cured the habit and the disease, and she lived out the psalmist's allotment. An everyday occurrence now, it created a great stir in England two generations ago.

Men and women who write their autobiographies are as a rule prompted to such achievements by considerations other than the desire to leave a legacy to the world or to attain immortality; some do it to clear up their own problems; others do it to facilitate or effect reform; a few like Benjamin Franklin do it altruistically.

Herbert Spencer wrote his autobiography to supplement his philosophical work; it shows chiefly the anxiety of its author to state anew the conclusions he had reached in his studies of ethics and sociology. It is the picture of a man, engrossed

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in mental efforts, disregarding the part played by emotions and affections, cold, didactic and impersonal. It forms a striking contrast to the autobiography of Darwin which, though not really a book at all, but a chapter included in his *Life and Letters,* reveals the modesty, effacement and simplicity which were the most lovable and conspicuous qualities of the epoch-making scientist. *Far Away and Long Ago,* the story of the early life of another English naturalist and one of the most delightful biographies extant, was written to liberate a shut-in personality. It is strange, in view of this book, that less was known about W. H. Hudson at the time of his death a few years ago, than of any writer in Great Britain. But he was the real "solitary-hearted." Even to the small circle of his literary friends, he was not communicative about himself. Had he lived a half century earlier, he might have found Thoreau sympathetic.

Some autobiographies are written to purge the author's conscience and mind of sins of youth or of hallucinatory memories. St. Augustine's and Tolstoi's *Confessions* are typical of this kind of self-history. St. Augustine dwells on the dissoluteness of his youth at such length that it is difficult to obtain constructive thought from the narrative. One would be tempted to believe that he found a certain pleasure in recalling the lusts and concupiscences he had left behind when he became converted, did not his later deeds and actions testify to the contrary.

There is no doubt that he was one of the greatest sinners and one of the greatest Saints of antiquity, but his *Confessions* which reveal exclusively his sins, are little help in aiding the conversion of a soul—unless that soul was of such nature that it would have converted itself; the *Confessions* are the result of an imagination stirred at the sight of sins and humbled by the telling of them. John Addington Symonds has given a comprehensive characterisation of their author in one of his letters:

"To treat the *Confessions* of St. Augustine with the same critical coldness of judgment that is brought to bear upon ordinary works of art or literature would be impossible. It stands alone among all the personal Biographies that have ever been written. It speaks to us, not like the ordinary narrative of a man's life, but like a deep cry of agony; which, once heard, resounds for ever in our ears, imparting its own pathos to all music that we hear, and confusing our utterance when we would express the meaning that it wakens in our soul."

The motive which prompted Huxley to write his autobiography is found in his desire to set the facts of his life as straight as he knew them, thus refuting what the malice, ignorance or vanity of others might construe them to be. Franklin, on the other hand, was desirous of showing how poverty could be overcome by thrift and shrewdness, and his autobiography has been a model for students of all ages. It is as valuable as a character-building book, as the autobiography of John Stuart Mill is valuable in showing the waste there is in modern education; the latter also wished to have his contribution serve as a tribute to Mrs. Taylor, but both Franklin's and Mill's can be classified under the heading of constructive writing, with an objective which embraces a large portion of humanity.

These two works differ widely from the autobiographies of General Grant and Trollope, both of which were prompted by personal motives: the former to pay his debts, the latter to make money. Such motives do not necessarily detract from the charm or merit of an autobiography. Literary merit is not in direct relationship to moral or æsthetical considerations, and an autobiography written in the hope that the world will be improved by its perusal may not be worthy of comparison with one written with obviously personal reasons as its motive.

Many men and women who have made a success of life have been inspired, helped or guided by reading autobi-

ographies during their plastic years. It depends upon the individual's outlook on life which one helps him. If he is "practical" and material things appeal to him, Franklin's story does it; if he is beholden to ideals and the spiritual side of his nature is dominant, he finds aid and encouragement in Mark Rutherford's *Autobiography,* and *Father and Son,* by Edmund Gosse; if he is ambitious to be a mighty hunter and slay the wolf called want, he may fortify himself by reading stories like Hamlin Garland's *A Son of the Middle Border,* or *Episodes Before Thirty,* by Algernon Blackwood; if he is inclined to yield to the seductions of science and yet would avoid becoming a human monster like Gottlieb of *Arrowsmith* he would do well to familiarize himself with *Memoirs of My Life,* by Francis Galton; if he is "temperamental" and keen to know how the artistic temperament conditions behaviour and how devastating egocentrism may become, he can get enlightenment from *My Life,* by Richard Wagner. If Samuel Smiles' book appealed to him in his youth, he will like Mr. J. J. Davis's *The Iron Puddler,* or Mr. Roger Detaller's *From a Pitman's Note-Book;* if recutting and revamping the social fabric intrigues him, he will like Mr. Robert Smillie's *My Life for Labour,* or the *Autobiography of Samuel Gompers;* if within his heart there are graved some lines setting forth that this is the land of the brave, the home of the free, the arena of the ambitious, then Professor Pupin's *From Immigrant to Inventor* is the book for him; if he is a pessimist and wants to be cured, Sir Harry Johnston's *Story of My Life* will help him accomplish it; if he is of a romantic turn of mind, *Everywhere,* the Memoirs of A. Henry Savage Landor may be tolerated, and if his vindictiveness has never been adequately appeased, Lady Oxford's *Memoirs* and particularly those that she wrote when she was called Margot Asquith will be satisfying to him, especially if he is keen to attract and rivet the attention of all mankind: peer, superior and inferior.

Few men to whom one of the fine arts or any branch of

the humanities appeal, escape pubescent inquiry concerning such things as the meaning of life, the soundness of traditional religion, the value of convention, the genuineness of the social fabric, the sincerity of morality: and the resulting apprehension and depression in sensitive natures amount oftentimes to despair and disorientation. John Addington Symonds and William Hale White—particularly the latter—are the doctors for such patients. *The Early Life of Mark Rutherford,* contrary to its deserts, has never been a popular book here or in England. It is a fine presentation of the artistic temperament trying to persuade itself to wear the garments of Puritan dogma, shedding them in moments of indignation and putting them on again when the voice whispered that Puritanism gives the closest expression of the truth about life; it shows the agony of the imaginative genius struggling with the problems of practicality, while in spiritual travail. It appeals especially to the sad and solitary; to those dazed by the glamour of the modern world; to those who, dismayed by its pretentiousness and disgusted by its speciousness, clamour for simplicity or belief. But it has a message for every one who thinks too much of himself, or who is out of alignment with his fellows and the world.

Part II: INTERPRETATIONS

Part II: Interpretations

III

LITTERATEURS: AMERICAN WRITERS

A Story Teller's Story, by *Sherwood Anderson.*
William Dean Howells, by *Oscar W. Firkins.*
Lafcadio Hearn's American Days, by *Edward Larocque Tinker.*
Mark Twain's Autobiography.
Henry Thoreau, by *Leon Bazalgette.*
The Pilgrimage of Henry James, by *Van Wyck Brooks.*

THE next best thing to talking about ourselves is talking about others. Hence the lure of autobiographies, biographies, and autobiographical fiction. James Joyce wrote a book half the size of Webster's Dictionary to tell of a few hours in his own life, and Ben Hecht seemingly cannot exhaust himself. The genesis and development of personality can be conveyed only by words. Palette and brush in master hands can preserve for posterity the lineaments, and in a measure the character, of those we love and those the world admires or fears; but the written word alone is the medium to convey the soul. Sherwood Anderson has laid bare his soul in *A Story Teller's Story,* and he has drawn a portrait of his father that surpasses Velasquez' *Innocent VI.*

Rarely have autistic and purposeful thinking, revery and directed mental activity, been so skilfully displayed, so successfully made vocal. In the lines, and between the lines, Mr. Anderson has told all he knows about himself and more. He has put psychologists and writers, be they Freudians or behaviourists, subjectivists or objectivists, under obligation to

him, for he has permitted them to observe the gestation and travail of the poet's fancy, the birth and growth of poetical form. His story, taken with Mr. Stieglitz's portrait, tells all there is to know about a creature at once as simple as the heart of a child and as complex as the mid-brain of an adult who first saw the light of day in Camden, Ohio, nearly half a century ago.

He knows little of his ancestry, but that little goes a long way to explain him. His father, a fifty-fifty mixture of Colonel Sellers and Wilkins Micawber, born in the South and given to rum, romancing, and revery, was once a dandy and always a hokum expert. The origin of his mother, who had been a bound girl in a farmer's family until she married, was something of a mystery, which her children did not care to solve; but she was kind, indulgent, faithful, and she suffered fools silently. Her mother was an Italian peasant, one eyed, polyandrous, and at times murderous. Once a tramp tried to rob her humble home. She beat him until he begged for mercy; then she filled him and herself with hard cider and the two went singing off together down the road. Marvellous germ- and sperm-plasm for a poet; wondrous parentage for one destined to be absorbed by the visual fancies of his unconscious, to see strange features in the clouds with Polonius, and faces in the fire with William Blake. No wonder Sherwood Anderson has often been called a "nut." He is not averse to being thought a little insane, but he has been stung to the quick by charges of "personal immorality." One with such ancestry is perhaps not so likely to be an invert as a poet, but it is from similar ancestry that they both not infrequently come. Had Mr. Anderson investigated the forebears of Judge Turner who found the boys of his town were not of his sort and was unable to understand them, who had never married, and indeed cared nothing for women, he would have found them in many respects similar to his own. The judge was very congenial to him, despite the disparity of age.

They saw many things eye to eye; and the short, fat, neatly dressed man with bald head, white Van Dyke beard, cold blue eyes, soft round white cheeks, and extraordinarily small hands and feet, is as typical an example of the strange genesic anomaly as was M. de Charlus whose acquaintance we made in Marcel Proust's much discussed *Swann's Way*. To understand the long, long thoughts the judge had when as a boy he meditated poisoning some of his schoolmates, one must either have "temperament" and "fixations" like Mr. Anderson's or else be a psychiatrist.

A Story Teller's Story is full of portraits, mostly miniature, but here and there is a lifesize done with a few sweeps of the brush. Such is that of Alonzo Berner, from whom Mr. Anderson learned as much about men as Mr. Kipling did about women from the "arf caste widow, the woman at Prome, the wife of the head groom or the girl at home." Alonzo did not have that contempt for men that Sherwood had. He knew the great commandment "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"; he had learned there was none other greater; and it was vouchsafed him to believe. "Where had I got my contempt and how had he escaped getting it?" You got it, Sherwood, from the one-eyed grandmother who tried to kill her granddaughter with a butcher knife, who had four husbands and was ready for a fifth. Alonzo escaped it through the father who had, the night the stallion Peter Point died, "some thought about most human beings, including myself, that I haven't ever forgot."

Next to the evolution of the artist, the determination of Sherwood Anderson to be a writer, the transformation from slug laborer to chrysalis writer, these analyses are best in a book which is all excellent.

Freudians will find Mr. Anderson's story of his life corroborative of their teachings. Fanciful birth, vicarious parentage, fantasying childhood, reverying manhood, sexual fixation, self-observation, unconscious fantasy following in the wake of

conscious thought, conflict between authority and desire—all these and more are here. Rather than dwell upon them, and upon his artistic temperament, rather than attempt a summary of his conduct which would represent his strivings toward the beautiful, I shall discuss what may be called his urge to authorship. The most remarkable thing about it is that it did not seize him until comparatively late in life. What it lost in forwardness it made up in intensity. After having lived nearly one-half of the life of man as a laborer and business man, he began to write.

"There never was such a mighty scribbler as I later became and am even now. I am one who loves, like a drunkard his drink, the smell of ink, and the sight of a great pile of white sheets that may be scrawled over with words, always gladdens me . . . oh, what glorious times I have had sitting in little rooms with great piles of paper before me; what buckets of blood have run from the wounds of the villain foolish enough to oppose me on the field of honour; what fair women I have loved, and how they have loved me and on the whole how generous, chivalrous, and open-hearted and fine I have been!"

The song chanted by Solomon that has come down the ages to testify that the wisest of men was also a poet, is not more pregnant with sincerity, no more redolent of fervor than Mr. Anderson's record of his art which he sought in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stars. By night on his bed he sought it; he sought it in city streets and country fields, from watchman and from barman, only to find it finally within himself; in his own creating, shaping intellect into which the unconscious had projected its own grist. He began to write of his observations, experiences, and fantasies; and as he wrote he seasoned them more and more generously with his aspiration: to cause his fellow men to share his love of beauty, to thrust beauty first upon the middle west and then upon the U. S. A., to show that happiness and prosperity are not synonymous. He was by nature a word-fellow who could

at most any time, be hypnotised by high-sounding words, and he was to come under the influence of Gertrude Stein, a "surefire" verbal artist; all of this resulted in *Many Marriages,* which was the life of the author strung on a fictional clothes horse. John Webster's *grand geste* in fiction is Sherwood Anderson's in reality. It came to him like a revelation; it came with a rush: the overwhelming feeling of uncleanliness engendered by buying or selling. "I was in my whole nature a tale-teller. My father had been one and his not knowing had destroyed him. The corrupt unspeakable thing that happened to tale-telling in America was all concerned with this matter of buying and selling." And so he walked out of his factory saying to his secretary, "You may have it, I am not coming back any more." As he walked along a spur of railroad track, over a bridge, out of the town, he whispered to himself, "Oh, you tricky little words, you are my brothers and for the rest of my life I will be a servant to you."

That is what he is to-day and likely will remain—a servant of words. And though their servant, he is yet their master, for he is able to assemble them in beauty and in majesty; he can march them rhythmically in single or double file, or in platoons; he can blend them as a kaleidoscope blends colors; he can draw from them a harmony that Rimsky-Korsakoff drew from sounds, that Léon Bakst drew from motion and colour. Indeed, there is a music in his style which, though not classical, is charming. There is a measured flow of words in every sentence; alliterations and rhythms, resonances and luminosities which no contemporaneous American writing exceeds. But its author has a lack and a compulsion. The former is in the ideational field, the latter in the emotional. He lacks capacity for synthesis and integration, and he is obsessed with sex. No one who reads of Nora, and of the high school graduate from an Illinois town who had married a young man of that place and come to Chicago with her husband to make their way in the great world, can fail to in-

terpret his obsession; neither can the reader fail to understand how large it has loomed in Mr. Anderson's life.

The stories Sherwood Anderson used to hear on every side in stable, work-shop, and factory concerned, he says, one impulse in life. He grew unspeakably weary of hearing them, and gradually a doubt invaded his mind. A similar weariness has come to many readers of his stories; and the doubt that he had of his fellow keg rollers, I have of him.

Few critics will be able to dispose of Sherwood Anderson in as brief space as his friend Mr. Ben Hecht: "I can give you all of Sherwood Anderson in a sentence—the wistful idealisation of the masculine menopause." Like so many things Mr. Humpty Dumpty Hecht says, there is truth in it.

Sherwood Anderson of manic-depressive temperament is an artist who is a blend of many characteristics, the predominant one of which is a love of beauty, particularly of form. All of them are inherited. Had he been able, or enabled, to bring the unconscious of his makeup into consciousness early in life, he might have earned the immortality of Hawthorne, Howells, or Crane. Had he studied Fielding instead of Whitman, Chekhov instead of Clemens, he might have been the bell-cow of the literary herd of the midwest. The man who first said "It is never too late to mend" has much to answer for.

§

Bliss Perry, whose reputation for sanity, soundness, and penetration as a literary critic has long been established, says that Mr. Firkins's study of William D. Howells is a great biography. I feel as a pariah should feel when I cannot share an authority's conviction and sentiment. But there is a discursiveness, a pretentiousness, a highfalutin tone about it that distract me, and a papal atmosphere about it that I do not breathe easily or invigoratingly. Little annoying flaws of grammar and construction obtrude themselves while one

reads it. "I will set down briefly the migrations and occupations of the family." "The style has a pre-existence in the psychology, is in essence the ingress of that psychology into language." "When an incident of travel reaches its probe into the sensitiveness of the author's profoundest and saddest convictions," etc.

Self-forgetfulness, it has been said, is the beginning of happiness among books; and it is because I cannot get lost to myself that I have found less pleasure in Mr. Firkins's book than in any save Mr. Bok's. When I read "the curious strengthening of the position of the amphibious Balzac in our day," I immediately begin searching for the justification of "curious"—and why "amphibious"? Then there darts into my memory chamber a line from an *Essay in Criticism,* by Robert Lynd, that I read two or three years ago in *The London Mercury*: "All criticism is, from one point of view, an impertinence." Stuart P. Sherman, reviewing recently Mr. Mencken's latest book, said he was determined to conclude his review with a gesture of amicality. I am equally determined to say that Mr. Firkins's book would not have received such universal praise from the reviewers had it not deserved it.

§

We like to read about men of genius and identify our virtues with theirs; we deny ourselves their sins, and we do not recognise our limitations in theirs. Lafcadio Hearn was a man of genius who had tremendous limitations, and undoubtedly the Reverend John Roach Straton would say he wallowed in sin. But he was an interesting human being; he had a most uncommon ancestry; and if there were any occidental and Christian conventions he did not trample upon, transcend and rail at, it was because he did not encounter them.

In one of his letters to Henry E. Krehbiel, he called himself a dreamer of monstrous dreams. The reader who gets

information of Hearn from Mr. Tinker's book will think he should have said "a monster dreamer of monstrous dreams," for the Hearn depicted in *Lafcadio Hearn's American Days* was a monster. He ate like one, he loved like one, he had no family feeling, no capacity for sustained friendship. No hand extended to help him was withdrawn unbitten; no kindness was ever accepted that he did not endeavour to repay with cruelty and abuse; no appreciation and praise were ever accorded him that he did not reciprocate with scurrility and scorn. Exceptions prove the rule: Mr. Courtney's hand bore no teeth marks and Elwood Hendrick still speaks lovingly of him.

All that Mr. Tinker says of him may be true, but it is not a picture of Lafcadio Hearn as he really was, or as the letters published by Mrs. Elizabeth Bisland Wetmore discover him, or as *Reminiscences* by his widow show him to be. He was hybrid, he was oversexed, he had paranoiac trends, he was pathologically sensitive and morbidly timid, he was deformed facially and possibly morally, and he saw neither far nor straight. What has all that to do with Lafcadio Hearn, an asset of literature? He wrote like a god and he made angelic music. *Chita, Kokoro, The Nun of the Temple of Amida,* attest it. He was a critic in the class of Rémy de Gourmont. He was a translator that Mrs. Constance Garnett would call master. He had a flair for beauty of literary style keener than any one since Pater. He could not judge men and he could not discriminate between women; he had no colour sense, and his olfactory sense was abnormal; he had greater compassion for turtles and toads than he had for Jesuits and Jews; but he rarely hurt any one's feelings save those of Mr. Alden. That grand old mediator of writers' thoughts and reflections said, "Father, forgive him, he neither knows the nature of his act, nor the enormity of the offence, for he is a genius." He may not have been "cultured" to a twisted mind like that possessed by Dr. George M. Gould, but Goethe would

have thought him cultured, for he was a poet; and George Moore would have made an affirmation to that effect for, like himself, Hearn was a story-teller; Aristippus would not have denied him, for he too was a hedonist, and Anatole France would have proclaimed him, for they both held that beauty was the touchstone for worth.

Judged by his contribution to literature, he was a man of culture and he had illumination and understanding.

I can understand that it interests physicians, especially psychiatrists, to investigate the ancestry and study the conduct of men who agitated the waters of their time; but I cannot understand what bearing heritage or behaviour has on the contribution of these men to literature. How does it concern the seeker of emotional solace or intellectual sustenance to know that Poe and Verlaine were drunkards, that Rimbaud and Baudelaire were inverted genesically; that Hearn's father was an Irish rake devoid of parental responsibility, his mother an Ionian of composite ancestry profoundly psychopathic who married a Jew?

Mr. Tinker says, "Hearn's peculiarities and mental affinities were entirely the result of idiosyncrasies of ancestry and youthful environment." Well, is Hearn any different in that respect from the whole world? Does Mr. Tinker aim to do what Mr. White recently attempted to do for Woodrow Wilson: allot his cardiac virtues to the Wilsons and his cerebral gifts to the Woodrows? I suppose he would attribute his bulimia and illassible sexual cravings to Charles Bush Hearn; his tenderness for cats and his desire to create beauty to Rosa Tessima; his Jesuit phobia to the strain of English blood; his penchant for gastronomics to the Turk strain; his *Wanderlust* to an ancestral Arab; his passion for personal cleanliness to a gipsy forebear who had learned that there are few more pleasant experiences than those of bathing; his pride to a remote Moor; but his sensitiveness came from his wall eye—all his friends say that.

Mr. Tinker thinks "his warring inherited instincts were to have a large part in moulding his life, for they made of his soul a battleground. Frank Oriental sensuousness was shamed, but not curbed, by Anglo-Saxon self-control. Gallic expansiveness tried to break through Arab impassivity, and all the while, Gipsy lure of the road and love of new location lashed his life to restlessness; in short, what one set of inherited impulses bade him do, another inhibited, until all constructive action was paralysed."

Lafcadio Hearn's soul as it has been revealed to me from a long intimacy with his writings is not my idea of a battleground. Undoubtedly his instincts had much to do with shaping his life. They have in shaping the life of any one who amounts to something. Lafcadio Hearn had a very high sex coefficient and he did not bend the knee to church and convention. Well, there are others, and I fancy they would deny that their souls are battlegrounds. And this paralysis of constructive action, how does that show itself? Certainly not in New Orleans, more certainly not in Japan. Perhaps in Martinique? The heat and the atmosphere there make for lassitude that is tantamount to paralysis. We are perhaps on safer ground in attributing it to them than to warring impulses. I need scarcely add that I do not admit Hearn's "paralysis of constructive action."

Mr. Tinker's book is a wrong picture of Lafcadio Hearn, but it is not the author's fault. It is Hearn's fault. He should not have philandered with Althea Foley; he should have spurned Dr. Gould's advances; and knowing Denny Corcoran's record he should have avoided him; and we can never forgive him for not wearing "stylebuilt" clothes. Had he done so he would not have had Krehbiel's door slammed in his face, nor would the great musical critic have had occasion to write the letter, Cæsarean in brevity and Nelsonian in construction: "Dear Hearn, you can go to Japan, or you can go to Hell."

Suppose Mr. Tinker were to get drunk and stay so more or less for a week, and that I should shadow him with camera and notebook. Does any one think that my record of his conduct and my picture of him would be correct or adequate? I do not. It might do him a great injustice.

However, much should be forgiven a biographer who makes such searching criticism as: Hearn's constant vigilance to suppress finally came to inhibit his creative power. This explains the carefully wrought artificiality—the tenuousness of subject matter, but the exquisite finish of form—which is characteristic of all his books. The truth is he was forced to spin gossamer out of hemp when he could have made it into strong rope.

§

William Dean Howells said that Mark Twain was the Lincoln of literature. That is the apogee of praise. The more facets of his personality we see, the more richly does he seem to deserve the praise.

The immortality of Poe, Whitman, and Mark Twain would seem to be assured. Other names have been on the roster long enough to make it fairly certain that they also will be chosen, but Hawthorne's reputation wanes as Melville's enhances. Edwin Robinson a generation hence may have greater renown than Longfellow, and William James may be quoted when Emerson is forgotten.

We long for a great emotional writer as the Jews long for a Messiah, and the fact that Mark Twain was vouchsafed us encourages me to believe that our chances are greater than those of the Jews. We have never had a really great poet unless Whitman was one, and not even an approach to a satirist, and Mark Twain is our signal contribution to humour. He had also the capacity to convey it, and an unawareness of the supremacy of either gift. With it all he was a philosopher, a man of culture, and fundamentally a poet.

His was the antithesis of the Messianic complex. He had a simple heart, and an intricate soul. None of his writings reveals it as does his autobiography. It is as unlike the customary autobiography as Mark Twain was unlike the average man. It does not begin with a tedious narrative of his forebears, and tiresome descriptions of their environment. Nor does it dwell upon his mental prodigiousness and moral sufficiency, followed by the enumeration of the obstacles he surmounted owing to his health, holiness, habit, and his unusual possessions. It does not end with a verbal portrait provocative of memories of Dr. Munyon and his warnings.

It is the picture of a man, happily not a one-hundred-per-cent-American, who lived during the second most important epoch of this country's history, and who from early childhood was a close observer and from his youth a faithful transcriber of his observations. He began to write his autobiography in his teens and continued to write it nearly to the day of his death. *Roughing It, Tom Sawyer, Life on the Mississippi, Innocents Abroad,* are just as much description of his life as his autobiography.

Mark Twain's conception of how to write biography was to start at no particular "period," to wander at will over his life, to talk only about the thing which interested him for the moment, to drop it when its interest threatened to pale, and to turn his talk upon the new and more interesting things that intruded themselves into his mind meantime.

It is not only the picture of Samuel L. Clemens that one gets with the autobiography. There are little masterpieces of his brother Orion, of his daughter Susy, of his wife and of his mother, and there is one of General Grant that should add to his fame as a generous, kindly, big-hearted, forgiving man.

Did any one ever describe an amiable person so well as he describes his fellow schoolboy John Robards; and did any one ever succeed better in conveying the handicap that excessive amiability puts upon its possessor? But the kohinoor

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of this tray of jewels is his description of his brother Orion. Mark Twain may not have succeeded in writing an account of his own life that was satisfactory, or that he considered revelatory, but the description and analysis of his brother's personality is a real contribution to psychology and biography. It is possibly the best description of a human chameleon in all literature. It may never become as familiar as that of Colonel Sellers, for Mark Twain did not put him *au naturel* in his fiction. Orion Clemens was fifty-fifty optimist and pessimist. Aside from the fundamental endowments of honesty, truthfulness, and sincerity, he was as unstable as water, as inconstant as a weather vane. He had an unquenchable thirst for praise. You could dash his spirits with a single word; you could raise them unto the sky with another. He was a Presbyterian one Sunday, a Methodist the next, and a Baptist when the fancy seized him. He was a Whig to-day, Democrat next week, and anything fresh he could find in the political market the week after. He invariably acted on impulse and never reflected. He woke with an eagerness about some matter or other every morning; it consumed him all day; it perished in the night; and before he could get his clothes on he was on fire with a fresh interest next morning. He literally took no thought for the morrow, and it was inevitable that his illustrious brother should have to support him during his waning days. Psychologically, he was a splendid example of adult infantilism, manic-depressive temperament; genius is often associated with these possessions.

The outline and the penumbra of these same qualities are to be seen in Mark Twain himself. He was emotional, impulsive, explosive, avid of praise, subject to depression and exaltation, and unprovident. But he was teachable and his eldest brother was not; experience taught him and environment influenced him, but they had no more effect upon Orion than headache has upon a drunkard. Above all, the possession that distinguished Samuel from Orion was humor.

There is much inquiry these days whether man has ceased to progress, and biologists ask themselves if evolution is at a standstill. From the standpoint of intellectuality it has apparently ceased. We have had nothing the past two thousand years that compares with the eight hundred years of unfettered thought which the human race enjoyed while Greek philosophy was supreme. That progress has ceased from the standpoint of emotionality is not so apparent, and this is the ray of hope that reaches us; for if it has not ceased, we can confidently look forward to a new code of ethics that will be livable, a new dispensation that will allow the sheep and the goats to pasture in the same field and sleep in the same shed, a new religion that will be reconcilable with science.

It transcends understanding that so much attention is given to the intellect and so little to the emotions. It is the latter, together with articulateness, that distinguish us from the beast, and approximate us to God. Humour and love are the two most precious emotional possessions. Mark Twain had them both, and none of his writings reveals them more conspicuously than his autobiography. His account of Orion's adventure at the house of Dr. Meredith, his description of how he himself caught the measles, how he found the fifty-dollar bill and the thoughts that it engendered, how he was temporarily cured of the habit of profanity by his wife, are examples of his humour; and his accounts of Susy, of his wife, of Patrick, reveal his love. His narratives about the burglarisation of his house, the interview with President Cleveland's wife, the potato incident at the Kaiser's dinner party, his description of the illness and death of his little boy—as well as the testimony of his family and intimates show how enslaved he was by revery.

One of the many things that make this autobiography so delightful, is its revelation of how human Mark Twain was in his sympathies and antipathies, in his loves and hatreds. His words about Susy and Livy are as tender as anything I

have read in a long time, and his account of Patrick makes one regret that the juggernaut Progress has eliminated the coachman. In the jargon of the day, Theodore Roosevelt "got his goat"; and the things he said about those who sought to crush him after they had brought about his financial ruin would not be considered printable in the Victorian era.

Mark Twain was in deadly earnest about many things he said "in fun." I choose to believe that when he wrote, "I intend this autobiography shall become a model for all future autobiographies, and I also intend that it shall be read and admired a good many centuries because of its form and method," he meant what he said. Whether he meant it or not it is true, and his country, proud of him, should be pleased with the account he left of himself to be published posthumously. It is ideal though it is not adequate. Those who would know what sort of man Mark Twain was may find out by reading it; those who wish to learn what he accomplished, how he did it and where, may learn from Mr. Paine's biography of him. It is to be hoped that the rumour that there are other volumes to follow is founded in fact.

Mark Twain was a spiritual composite of Patrick, the coachman and gentleman; of Mr. Burlingame whose ways were all clean, whose motives were high and fine; of Dr. John Brown who immortalised his own name with *Rab and His Friends;* and of his brother Orion, as they are described by himself. The best of Hermes was beaten up in the mixture. Joe Miller and Miguel Cervantes alternated as batter beaters.

§

The further removed we get from the time of Henry David Thoreau, the more appealing his personality and his experiment will be to us and to our descendants. He was difficult to approach, more difficult to companion, impossible to love, and hard to admire. Death took the offence

out of his egotism, the meaninglessness out of his paradoxes, the repulsion out of his self-sufficiency. We forget his congenital and laboriously acquired incapacity for enthusiasm when we read how he championed John Brown. It no longer irritates us that he was determined to base the laws of the universe on his own experiences and convictions when we see through the vista of nearly a century how he lived his hermit-like life. Time pales his peculiarities and limitations, and tints his possessions and virtues. It may safely be prophesied that, as we grow individually more sophisticated and nationally less democratic, the books that have been made from his diary will be read with greater avidity and more understanding.

A new biography of the Poet-Philosopher-Naturalist and America's first famous recluse, written by a foreign pen, justifies these statements. Mr. Van Wyck Brooks has made a translation of the book which mirrors his culture and testifies his mastery of literary technique. It is the work of a Frenchman who stresses the Gallic and Celtic strain in Thoreau, and who sympathises with his determination to create and develop himself, to live, to make of existence the most beautiful work of art. M. Bazalgette pitches his song of praise in a high key. At times, it taxes the reader's credulity; at other times, the high notes long sustained exhaust him. The biographer loves to dwell on Thoreau's affectivity. He not only tells how Thoreau felt, he describes his thoughts, and the thoughts he should have had. But he makes no estimate of him as a poet, philosopher or naturalist. He submits the facts of his life, the contacts of his activity, and lets the reader draw his own conclusions. It is a picture of Thoreau that many will prefer to that drawn by Sanborn, or Channing who knew him intimately, or by Marble or Salt who were dependent upon his diaries and letters for their information; for many prefer portraits that are idealised, and he depicts his physical features as no other biographer has done. M. Bazalgette essays to reincarnate and display the

poet's thoughts on his peregrinations and pilgrimages. Some of these reflections are infantile, a few puerile, such as the description of his knapsack and the little bundle he carried in his hand; the discussion of the advantages of an umbrella over a raincoat; the discourse on shoe strings and on old newspapers.

There can be little doubt that Thoreau was sometimes playful and joyous with human beings, but I doubt if he were ever so capable of self-forgetfulness as it is alleged he was on a visit to New Bedford when he executed, before his hostess at the piano, a Zulu dance in the presence of Mr. Alcott. The story reminds one of the conduct of the First Ranger in Von Weber's romantic opera.

It was a strange freak of nature that manifested itself in Concord, Mass., July 12th, 1817, by the birth of a Thoreau child to which was given the name of Henry David. In breeding parlance he was a "sport," but from the social standpoint, he was far removed from it. He did not have the varied ancestry that Sinclair Lewis gives Doctor Martin Arrowsmith, but it was diversified enough to satisfy any one. Three distinct chromosonic streams, French, Scotch and Saxon, confluented in him. His father was the son of a Frenchman born in the Isle of Jersey who married Jane Burns, daughter of a Quaker Scotch who emigrated to Massachusetts. His mother's forebears, the Dunbars and the Jones, had been long enough in this country to be entitled to the designation American.

There was little of Hermes in Henry Thoreau, but that little he got from a maternal uncle, Charles Dunbar, and from him also he got his unconventionality, his *wanderlust,* his self-command, his equilibrium and determination. Uncle Charles had a disdain for taking thought of the morrow that amounted to contempt and nephew Henry inherited it. Where he got his self-sufficiency, his indifference to man and his comforts, his amatory dysesthesia we are still uninformed.

No biographer has ever found much material for his pen in the plastic years of Thoreau. M. Bazalgette has been no more successful than his predecessors. Thoreau's most distinctive urge: love of nature, and the most conspicuous feature of his personality: self-sufficiency, revealed themselves early in life and accompanied him to the day of his death, and that is all there is to be said. Neither in school nor in college did his conduct suggest scholarship or antinomianism, but on leaving Harvard his Commencement Oration, in which he unrolled his map of life, suggested them both. His auditors perceived but did not apprehend that the future itinerant surveyor had had other engrossments than examinations at Harvard. For him "this curious world which we inhabit is more wonderful than it is convenient; more beautiful than it is useful; it is more to be admired and enjoyed than used. The order of things should be somewhat reversed: the seventh should be man's day of toil wherein to earn his living by the sweat of his brow, and the other six his Sabbath of the affections and the soul." The distinguishing feature of the paranoiac is that he reasons logically, often trenchantly, but his premises are always wrong. One could argue that the world is the most congenial place we know, that its usefulness is testified by the mouths that it feeds, that those whom it supports would not go very far should they substitute admiration for use of it.

Radicalism which had budded slowly in college flowered quickly at home. It disturbed his family and annoyed his town-folk but water on a duck's back was a riot compared to the sensations that their disturbance and annoyance caused in him. Had he been in the habit of invoking supernatural aid he probably would have said, "God help me, I can do no other." A college course nearly a century ago was supposed to prepare for a vocation, but Henry Thoreau manifested no sign that it had prepared him. He began to teach in the public school, but his ideas and conduct were offensive to parent and tax-

payer, so he started a school of his own and began to be keenly attentive to his sole confidant, his diary; and he built a boat. In it, he and his brother John went from Concord, Mass., to Concord, New Hampshire. The description of that trip is the only tiresome section in M. Bazalgette's book. This is all the more astonishing to one who read *The Week* in his boyhood, was fascinated by it, and who has read parts of it many times since then.

Thoreau's contact with the transcendentalists is described most sympathetically, and the sketches which the author makes of some of the leading figures, Emerson, Alcott, Channing, Margaret Fuller, are animated and vigorous. If ever one falls in love with Thoreau it is when he goes to the Emersons, to work for his board, as it were. Here for the first time, he seems to be human: his playfulness with the children, his praise of Mrs. Fuller, his appreciation of Aunt Mary testify his kinship to man. The chip which he seemed always to carry on his shoulder when he frequented the haunts of man, was consigned to the woodbox and quickly burnt up. Here he indulged his tastes and developed his ambition. The fields and the woods told him their secrets and his host took him on adventurous excursions through the clouds into the realms of philosophy. The children adored him, birds trusted him, beasts loved him. Thoreau was happy and admitted it. But happiness like all other things in the world is transitory and cyclical. He found it out when he went to Staten Island to tutor the Philosopher's nephew. Neither the child nor the parents was sympathetic, and he was soon back in Concord helping his father make pencils. Manual labour was, in his opinion, the thing which agrees best with an intellectual worker. It would seem to have been congenial to him—at times. Agrippa would probably have agreed with him but scarcely any one this side of the Roman. But that no one was in accord with him would not have disturbed Henry Thoreau. Like all possessors of paranoiac trends, he had

faith and confidence in himself that transcended in intensity and depth every other kind of faith and confidence. He was not like other men. He was an American who cared nothing about getting on; a Yankee without the slightest relish for trading; a man who seemed bent on remaining poor; an individual in whose veins flowed the blood of the Celt and the Gaul, whose temperature had never been raised by any of Eve's descendants; he was the one man in all the world who did not need a friend. He could heed nothing that was said by man and he could hear everything that was said by Nature. Public opinion was against him, but he had a contempt for public opinion and for those who made it that words are impotent to express. He liked all animal life, man least of all. The higher one goes in the scale of animal life, the less the species understood him and trusted him. His fellows found him conceited, sarcastic, uppish; animals found him kind, companionable and simple. Men doubted his sincerity and his sanity, but their doubt was founded on their own fatuity. Animals trusted him. He was in love with the world and satisfied with himself. He was more incapable of love than Amiel. He had some family feeling as a child, but as years went by, it was replaced by an affectionate feeling for poor, ignorant, simple people, and small folk. They were his real family. He did not want to live with them; he wanted to live alone, but he wanted to think of them. They were like regular work, they would prevent him from living his life. The simple life as Roosevelt understood it was a riot of luxury for Thoreau.

It is well-known that solitude whether of desert or mountain often increases self-consciousness to such a degree that the individual doubts his own identity. But the eternities did not press down on Thoreau, or submerge the boundaries of his reason. Neither solitude nor poverty, neither dreaming nor distress of mind could make a mystic of Thoreau. He was

practical and pragmatic, but the world of his acquaintance would not admit it. He patted the non-conformist of religion on the back; he spat in the face of the non-conformist of life.

The whole world knows that he built himself a cabin on Walden Pond; as John the Baptist did in the wilderness, he nourished himself on locusts and wild honey with an occasional cereal and vegetable. For two years he devoted himself to finding out what life is and how it should be lived. Thoreau's poetic biographer would have us believe that every hour in Walden was like the measure of sand passed through the sieve of the gold seeker—it left enough of residue to make a boy comfortable for the rest of his days; perhaps it did, but many of his readers other than those from Missouri will want to have other proof of it than is given in a book entitled *Walden, or Life in the Woods*. It is the romantic Frenchman who sees him there in this setting.

"You would say then that the earth had chosen this poor, shy boy whom you see absorbed there, on the threshold of his cabin, as an instrument for thinking in peace of its own unity and eternity. How can he say where he is? The planet is silent, time and space are strangely annihilated, the notion of any journey is lost, he may be at the antipodes. Under the pines of Walden, this man who is lost in his dream is Mir Mohammed Ali, perhaps, the painter of Ispahan; his American profile is drawn in miniature in the colours of a precious stone on the blue of the pond. Or is he some Chinese poet-philosopher in whom mingle the souls of animals, and plants, and hermits sitting under an arbour near a little lake? There comes to this man as he listens to sounds beyond music, a music that is deeper and more ample than the music of his everyday life; he feels on his palate as it were a taste of immortality—it grows clearer than the clear morning about him. This beetle that buzzes by, this sweet flag swaying on the pond are like messengers charged with transmitting to him the friendship of men who have dreamed the same dreams in the depth of the old Orient."

But the friendship of the forest became irksome to Thoreau and he went back to the Sage's house while the Sage himself was abroad. Again it fitted him like an old glove. He was not ecstatic there as he was in his cabin on the pond, but he was happy; this happiness was interrupted by a lady who thought to marry him, but like so many other little annoyances of life, the trouble was transitory. After a short time he tried lecturing but he did not hit it off with his audiences. They could not stomach either his paradoxes or his ferocious affirmations. He irritated, not amused them; he bored, not instructed them.

When he was in contact with a superior like Emerson or Agassiz, he curbed his tongue, but how he really felt about scientists may be learned from his journal; he considered them pedantic and pretentious. He went to Boston to consult a book but, in the Library he was so self-conscious that he could not concentrate his attention. The city, though it reeked of respectability, was full of shams and shoddy. "What," he demanded, "is the real?"

The one great enthusiasm of Thoreau's life was engendered by John Brown. He had no more patriotism than he had family-feeling, but he had an enormous sense of justice. The speeches and conduct of that veteran abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison, moved him considerably, but the seizure of the arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, on October 18th, 1859, frenzied him. He had met John Brown, he had learned something of his thought and of his plans, without being particularly moved by them. But he was agitated to the depth of his soul by the thought of the gallows' rope strangling the rough neck of his old friend and he began a verbal and scriptural drive to prevent the violence. It was the only real storm of his blood. M. Bazalgette describes it with great artistry. Likewise Thoreau's meeting with Whitman is well rendered, but with not quite the same attention to verity. The account of the naturalist's encounter with his hereditary enemy, tuber-

culosis, of his trip to the Middle West, of his last days, is masterfully done.

The great hiatus in Thoreau's nature, moral and physical, was his incapacity for friendship. Emerson liked him but not enthusiastically, and he was Emerson's handy man. Harrison Blake made a hero of him, and Daniel Ricketson of Cape Cod tried to deal with him on terms of equality; but the former's admiration annoyed him, and a little of the latter's *bonne camaraderie* sufficed him for a long time. The man who came nearest to him was William Ellery Channing: whimsical, fanciful, unsociable, infantile but charming—of whom Thoreau wrote: "He will accept sympathy and aid, but he will not bear questioning. He will ever be reserved and enigmatic and you must deal with him at arm's length." It is not improbable that he understood Thoreau but one is not convinced of it by reading *Thoreau, the Poet-Naturalist,* published in 1876.

M. Bazalgette's sympathy with his subject facilitates understanding, and the concluding pages of the seventh section of his book is the best soul-portrait of Henry Thoreau in existence. But it is not the last. Others will attempt it. Some day an interpreter of behaviour will explain the man who wrote, "For joy I could embrace the earth, I shall delight to be buried in it. And then I think of those among men who will know that I love them, though I tell them not." The interpreter will tell why he did not tell them and why he could not.

Henry Thoreau was an intellectual monster. It showed in his face, in his prehensility, dexterity, sense-acuteness and in his conduct. He was a misogynist, teetotaler, vegetarian. He had no family or community feeling. He was wholly devoid of the sense of humour. He had no generosity, no sense of obligation, no bowels of compassion, save for animals. He was a universal dissenter, saturated with keen self-appreciation and devoted to self-indulgence. He had none of the weaknesses called vices, few of the strengths called virtues, and despite it all in life he was happy and in death he is a

national asset. He will therefore always be an interesting subject for the moralist, the behaviourist and the psychologist.

His was a strange personality. He could not come out of himself, mingle with the world, lose his soul and thus save it. He had no wife, no children, no home, no town, no country as a part of himself, and yet despite this his "self" seemed not to suffer mutilation. A modern philosopher, Bradley, says: "A man is not what he thinks of, and yet is the man he is because of what he thinks of." Thoreau was a man made by thought and he was that man because of what he thought.

Henry Thoreau did not add to the world's knowledge, nor did his activities increase or facilitate its dissemination, but he made a contribution to the art of living at a time that was propitious and in a country that sadly needed it. He was a primitive in an artless land, an idealist in a country of materialists, a pagan in a community of puritans, a singer of nature to philistines with ears stuffed with cotton wool. He sought the ideal with the same ardour as man seeks the pleasure of the senses. He was a thinker, not a sensualist; a poet not a priest; a Pagan not a Christian; a genius not well poised who blazed the way for Burroughs and Muir and scores of others who have opened our eyes to the beauty of nature and have shown us how to appreciate and profit by familiarity with it. Personality defects fortunately do not long outlive the body. We quickly forget, when those we love are no longer with us, the things that annoyed us and we remember only their virtues. Time will remove the sting from Thoreau's contempt, the hurt from his disdain, the injury from his indifference to the beliefs and welfare of his fellow-man. It will deal with him as it is dealing with Woodrow Wilson.

§

"For God's sake, try to get at him" said Convick to his young friend when he threw Vereker's (Henry James') new

novel into his hand and asked him to review it for the *Times Literary Supplement*. The young friend did it and he was convinced that he *had* got at him; but later when Vereker said across the dinner table at a country house where he was staying, when the review came under discussion, "Oh, it's all right —the usual twaddle," Convick's young friend did not feel so puffed up. Yet he need not have felt humiliated, for Henry James himself was more lacking in specificity when he discussed his books than when he talked of anything else. The earlier ones were written that he might indulge his creative instinct (which was to produce works of art); the next that he might discover new avenues leading to art's treasury; the last that he might guess the riddle that he propounded. There was an idea in his work just the same as there was in Goya's. Goya was not able to describe it, neither was Henry James. A great many persons have succeeded in giving us a fairly comprehensive account of Goya's idea; and a few, for instance, Mr. Follett, Mr. Beach, Miss Rebecca West, have laboured with considerable success to make us see the treasures of patience and ingenuosity that Henry James displayed in the perpetuation of *his* idea. Many readers of Henry James do not see that the texture of his books constitutes a complete representation of what he believed to be an exquisite scheme, but the initiated do and that is all he had a right to expect.

A sensitive, scholarly, sympathetic student of literature, Van Wyck Brooks, who has made a serious and laborious study of his writings which he calls *The Pilgrimage of Henry James*, attempts to explain why Henry James made a failure of life. If the interested reader objects that the word "failure" is too strong, he has only to study the last years of the master's life, during which he expressed frequently to his friends a dissatisfaction with his accomplishments, and allowed them to discern that he had not received from the world the beer and skittles that he had anticipated in order to be convinced the term is not misapplied.

Mr. Brooks would have us believe that Henry James had a delusion and that it conditioned his conduct. The delusion was that somewhere in the world he could find a cordial, inviting culture; a people who would have urbanity, understanding, and charm; an arena where vulgarity of speech and conduct were rigorously excluded, where they would die of inanition did they succeed in forcing an entrance; where there would be no jostling, elbowing, or hurrying; where no one was better than his neighbour; where boasting was barred and boosting prohibited; a land where every prospect pleased and not even man was vile; the ideal land for which no one but a Henry James ever searches. Then Mr. Brooks thrusts an illusion on him as well, an optical illusion: he sees England as such a land.

After nursing the delusion for more than a quarter of a century, and after having lived intimately with the illusion for a similar period, the cloud began to lift from his mind, the scales to drop from his eyes. The delusion gradually left him and the illusion faded and vanished. Then his mind became the prey of a question: whether he might not have developed more harmoniously and survived more effectively had he remained in America. The question obsessed him and, strangely enough, since obsessions do not usually condition deliberate conduct, it compelled him to formulate a plan to "go back to America, to retrace the past, to see for himself, to recover on the spot some echo of ghostly footsteps, the sound as of taps on the window-pane heard in the glimmering dawn." He had been in cotton-wool too long, he must experience some of the perils of exposure, otherwise, he would succumb to the first draught; moreover, he was hungry for material, for an "all-round renovation of his too monotonised grab-bag"; he needed shocks.

Had I not such a high regard for Mr. Brooks as author and interpreter, I should reply to him as M'Liss did to the

school-examiner who sought to humble her beloved schoolteacher by posing the question: "Has the sun ever stood still in the heavens?" But as I have such esteem of him, of his sincerity and artistry, I content myself with saying, "It is not true." To bring Mr. Hueffer (I assume he means Ford Madox Ford) forward to give corroborative testimony does not bolster up the case. Mr. Ford is a discredited witness; his reputation for veracity has had a tremendous dent put in it recently by Mrs. Conrad. And I am in as favourable a position to give testimony as even Mr. Gosse. When Henry James made this "come back" attempt which Mr. Brooks elaborates in the chapter entitled "The Altar of the Dead," the arterial disease to which he finally succumbed had already progressed to such a stage as to give great anxiety and concern to his intimates. He put himself under my professional care and I saw him at close range nearly every day for two months; and talked with him, or listened to him, on countless subjects. I believe that it would not have been possible for him to have harboured and essayed the plan that Mr. Brooks credits him with having, or to have ruminated on it as he says he did, without my having become aware of its existence in his mind.

Henry James was a man out of the ordinary. He was the type of man that one, no matter how widely travelled, meets but once or twice in a lifetime. It would take a long time to enumerate his virtues, for he had them all, the cardinal and the trivial. He loved bread, music and the laugh of a child, hence no one kept him three paces distant. It would also take a long time to enumerate his defects, for though he had few of the major ones, he had a multitude of the minor.

I have always questioned whether it facilitates an understanding of Henry James the artist to understand Henry James the man. In my own case, I am sure I had as comprehensive a peep into his artistic soul after I had read *The Turn of the*

Screw, The Princess Casamasima, The Ambassadors, and *The Golden Bowl,* as after I had come to know him intimately, when he was engrossed in the problem of abstract design and fundamental organisation.

Henry James had an enormous amalgam of the feminine in his make-up; he displayed many of the characteristics of adult infantilism; he had a singular capacity for detachment from reality and with it a dependence upon realities that was even pathetic. He had a dread of ugliness in all forms, banality and vulgarity that the devil is reputed to have for Holy Water, and he was solitary hearted. Unlike Hartley Coleridge's queen of noble nature's crowning, he had love and he had understanding friends, but he had small capacity to avail himself of the gifts which they desired to lavish on him. His life had been devoted to the pursuit of an ideal; he had never been able to formulate with precision, or to describe that ideal with words. He came as near to it in the little story called *The Figure in the Carpet* as he could come to it. If he were not able to describe this ideal with the lucidity and comprehensibility with which Leonardo described his, when he was at the zenith of his creative power, why are we astonished at his inability to do it when these powers were undermined by arteriosclerosis?

The great defect in the makeup of Henry James was in the amatory side of his nature. His amatory coefficient was comparatively low; his gonadal sweep was narrow. Had he had a quarter of the former that Goethe possessed or one-half the sweep of Anatole France, it would be safe to say that Henry James would have been the greatest literary figure that ever came out of America, and that there would now be many James carrying his name to perpetuity. It is a measureless impediment, inability to fall in love; it is a dreadful handicap to have feminine and masculine characteristics nearly equally proportioned in one's makeup; adult infantilism makes tremendously for dissatisfaction with what life brings, and a

low basal metabolic rate which gives rise to a race of fletcherisers or other faddists is a burden that many find too hard to bear.

Henry James had them all. Had he not had them, he would have been happier and possibly he would have had a more successful career as an author, if success is measured by the rule of popularity. If his grandfathers had not been Irish; if he had spent his youth in Hoboken and not in Newport; if he had gone to school in the fifth ward and not in Switzerland; if he had had a little judicial starving meted out to him in his early maturity, he might have had a happier old age and fewer yearnings, fewer regrets that his life had not been fuller. Not that I admit for one moment that his old age was unhappy, or that he had such regrets or yearnings. The idea is Mr. Brooks'. It is in his book we find that here was a sort of a lost soul, beating its enfeebled wings against a cage from which time had not only removed the gild, but which it had rusted as well.

Henry James did not dislike America, but the people he met here with few exceptions did not interest him, and most of them annoyed him, sometimes to the point of explosion. He had had many pleasant experiences in Italy and in France, and he treasured them as a prima donna treasures programmes and testimonials. He often took them from the strongboxes of his memory and reinvoked the pleasurable sensations that he had had in acquiring them. Above everything in the world he valued good form, and all that it implies; good taste, good manners, good breeding, good conduct, and he had convinced himself from taking thought and from experience that it was to be had in England, even without the asking. He took his tree of life there and planted it and only one root developed, the social root. The political, the scholastic, the religious, the marathon roots, did not develop. In other words, the roots that make the tree of life so compelling of admiration in England did not grow from the tree that Henry James

planted there. The tree that did grow was, however, sturdy and majestic. It has given shade and protection to many travellers since its full growth. The man who planted it insured, so far as he could, that it should not soon be cut down, by making, a few months before his death, the supreme genuflection to the country of his adoption. He forfeited citizenship in the country of his birth and obtained citizenship in the country that had sheltered him during the years of his fruition. How could any such thesis as that of Mr. Brooks be maintained in view of this last great gesture of Henry James, and why is the act not mentioned in a book that aims to describe his pilgrimage?

Had James known that England is full of men like Jacob Heming, one of Stella Benson's Pipers, he probably would not have settled there; he might have gone to Spain. There are many things about that priest-infested, ceremonious country that would have appealed to Henry James. He would have fitted Toledo as an oyster its shell.

No one need concern himself with proving to me that a man sheds his inherited possessions only with the greatest difficulty. Among his inherited possessions I place his religion, his politics, and his "Patrie." If a man whose father was known to me as a Democrat tells me he is a Republican, I do not believe him. If a man whose parents were Roman Catholics and who was brought up in that faith tells me that he is a Baptist, I suspect his veracity. If I encounter a man living in England without obvious reason who tells me that he is an American, I immediately surmise that his conduct has been an offence to his own land. And all this despite the fact that I have known the sons of a Democrat who have always voted the Republican ticket, that I am on terms of intimacy with an Unitarian clergyman who was formerly a Roman Catholic priest, and that Mr. George Santayana seems to find England more sympathetic as a permanent residence than Massachusetts. Moreover, I do not recall having heard

of a lament from Joseph Conrad that he was not back in Poland or that he could not see Marseilles every now and then. I know an American family named James whose members have identified themselves conspicuously with the material and scientific progress of this country who sent a branch to England two generations ago and its members are more English than Winston Churchill; but that knowledge does not separate me from the belief that one of the most difficult things in the world to accomplish is to transfer a human tree, after it has had vigorous growth, from the soil of one country to another with the confident anticipation that it will bear abundant fruit. In the majority of cases, it will die; very rarely will it bear lusciously as it did in the case of Joseph Conrad. In some instances it will bear every few years, but then not copiously as it did in the case of Henry James.

Henry James had a happier life than any celibate who does not dedicate his days to verbal praise of God is entitled to have. Responsibilities as well as possessions are necessary for our happiness. They create facets which permit us contact with life; they tend to frustrate the increasing activities of the canker worm, egocentrism; and they succeed in convincing him who possesses them that he is but a leaf on the tree of humanity and not a branch or a bough. Had Henry James done his share in peopling the earth he would have been as happy as any man I have ever known save William Osler.

To uphold as a major thesis that, by forsaking the land of his birth he had not given an adequate earnest of his talent, that he had failed to saturate himself with life, that in his old age he found himself astray in the gloomy wood, and that "it had been too much for him over there," must appear contrary to common sense or sound judgment to any one who knew Henry James, who admired him as an artist and loved him as a man.

Is it not natural that a sensitive man, supremely susceptible to the seductiveness of society, should, when the pulse of

life begins to intermit, dwell upon the terrors of loneliness; become apprehensive of a future that would find him bereft of the sympathy that is the balm of life, of that understanding which is the support of the inelastic artery? Henry James knew that such society, sympathy, and staff were in Cambridge, that they were composited in the family of his brother William, that he might *have* to go to them, as we all have to go to the spring if there is no one to bring us the water.

He minimised the defects of his countrymen and exalted the virtues of his country as he grew older. It is the way of a man with the world. How often have I heard widows whose wounds I had dressed in their matrimonial days, speak of their husbands as Anthony Burgesse spoke of the Staffordshire Puritan Thomas Blake? "His kindness towards you could not be considered without love, his presence without reverence, his conversation without imitation. To see him live was a provocation to a godly life, to see him dying might have made one weary of living."

Any pilgrim who sets out on a journey may properly anticipate the necessities of life even though he does not take them with him, but it would be fatuous for him to hope for the comforts, and beyond belief that he should expect the luxuries. Henry James in his pilgrimage found the necessities, the comforts, and the luxuries, and we can never be sufficiently grateful to the country of his adoption for having given them to him without the asking.

François Mauriac, one of France's coming great novelists, one indeed who may be considered as having already arrived, said something in explanation of his latest novel with which Henry James, at least in his old age, would have agreed: "Even after years of living in Paris of friendships, of loves and of travels, when the novelist is convinced that he has accumulated enough human experience to fill a thousand plots, he is astonished that his heroes always come from beyond this tumultuous life—that they take shape in the darkest period

of years lived far from Paris and that they draw all their wealth from so much poverty and aridity." This constant going back to the years of youth and early adolescence which obsesses François Mauriac has been felt by Henry James and it is something of that sort that he had in mind when, wishing to pump the pure essence of his wisdom and experience into his most brilliant disciple, Edith Wharton, he said: "She must be tethered to native pasture, even if it reduces her to a backyard in New York."

Henry James was a master craftsman. He was concerned more with the pattern than with the material with which he worked. He was continually searching—not material but new ways of arranging it. M. Poiret reminds me of Henry James. Material does not concern him much. It is the way it is cut and basted. The finish is important too, but that is a detail. The pattern is the thing.

IV

LITTERATEURS: FOREIGN WRITERS

ANATOLE FRANCE HIMSELF, by *Jean-Jacques Brousson.*
ANATOLE FRANCE AND HIS CIRCLE, by *Paul Gsell.*
ANATOLE FRANCE, THE MAN AND HIS WORK, by *J. Lewis May.*
ANATOLE FRANCE À LA BÊCHELLERIE, by *Marcel Le Goff.*
SAINTE-BEUVE, by *Lewis Freeman Mott.*
LEONID ANDREYEV, by *Alexander Kaun.*
JOSEPH CONRAD, by *Ford Madox Ford.*
JOHN DONNE, by *Hugh l'Anson Fausset.*
THE WIND AND THE RAIN, by *Thomas Burke.*
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, by *John A. Steuart.*

ANATOLE FRANCE was picturesque, enigmatic and intriguing. He attracted illuminators and interpreters. His protracted age gave biographers ample time to prepare their revelations, interpretations and judgments which came with a rush soon after his death—and before, and which still come. The last of all these biographies is the best, that is, it gives the best picture of him, both as individual and as savant. M. Brousson, his Secretary for many years, had abundant opportunity to see Anatole France without the mask he habitually wore. He has embodied his observations and reflections in *Anatole France Himself,* and all readers save literary historians and critics will find it satisfying.

Much was written of Anatole France during the latter years of his life. His mode of life, methods of work, political, religious and social ideas; his theoretical antinomianism and his practical conformity to convention; and more than all his erudition excited curiosity, and from attempt to satisfy it, there resulted envy in some, dislike in others, admiration in all.

From a miniature
Courtesy of Edward Wassermann

ANATOLE FRANCE

The best interpretation of him and his work in English is by Mr. L. P. Shanks, a graceful writer, a penetrating critic. The works of Anatole France have been translated into English by Mr. Lewis May who published *Anatole France, the Man and His Work* in the year that preceded his death. It is an agreeable introduction to the great novelist, even though it is such a left handed and inadequate one. The chief reason why Mr. May's contribution to our knowledge and understanding of Anatole France falls short of its aim, is that the writer has not heeded the difference which exists between a biography and a panegyric. It is a custom sanctified by time that the death of a great contemporary figure should be the signal of a truce as it were; foes lay down their arms for a period of time, friends and admirers join in lauding the man who has gone to his reward. No one takes much stock in an obituary dictated by the emotional reaction engendered by death, and no one looks to such writing for constructive criticism, but when a biography is written during the lifetime of the subject—be he as old as Anatole France was when Mr. May published his—there should be less puffing and more illumination, less heat and more light. Mr. May allowed his personal feeling of friendship and his pleasure and pride of semi-intimacy with Anatole France to colour his estimate of the writer. He admires his versatility, his manysidedness, the rapidity with which he changed his point of view. These are no grounds for unqualified admiration. At most they would be occasion for wonder and amazement, but the biographer should point to the danger of such chameleon-like conduct, the weakness of such a nature. He "played all parts in turn and played them all well," but this very versatility shows a lack of intimate convictions and standards. A philosophy which consists of having none, a religion which insists on the unsatisfactoriness of all belief—these are destructive and bewildering forms of reasoning; but Anatole France combined these traits with qualities and achievements which amply balanced their in-

fluence. What we should have liked Mr. May to do, a thing which we are still waiting for a biographer to do, is to have summed up, after consideration, the contradictions, the theories, the principles and the talent of Anatole France, from which we might obtain clear, critical, impartial, sober judgment of the writer. He was more than any other author the Proteus of modern time, an image and symbol of the constant change in man, and, like Proteus, he could undergo a metamorphosis of ideas and judgments which baffled the world at large, and made his personality a puzzle. However, he did not have the reticence that the Greek hero had, nor the loathing for answering questions; and he was so articulate that his evolution is not difficult to master.

Every one agrees with Mr. May that Anatole France was a stylist of talent, a psychologist of merit and a philosopher of profundity and penetration, of smiling scepticism and amused tolerance; but to say that a fairy bent over his cradle and endowed him with some of the "douceur angevine" sung by Du Bellay, and that his voice is "the voice of all humanity" is disregarding the claims of criticism. That is just what Anatole France lacked most of all—the inspiring, soothing, beneficial, unforgettable smile of a fairy over his cradle. Had he had it, Mr. May's estimation of Anatole France's poetry, "that it will endure so long as literature continues to interest mankind," might find a more responsive acceptation.

Anatole France the man was so closely linked with Anatole France the writer that his biographers have been unable to separate them; and for this we should be thankful. From the best pictures that are presented to us, we gather an idea of the master-writer of the past generation that is complete and convincing; his life was devoted to writing; and his writing was always of life, as it appeared to him through intimacy with ancient masters; through study of history; through contemplation of his time; through deduction and observation of humanity. It is difficult to divorce him from his own per-

sonality, and the biographers who have succeeded in painting a picture of him that will endure have all recognised this impossibility.

Of the many authors who have attempted to set down some of the most interesting traits and characteristics of Anatole France, and who have done it when their personal recollections were still fresh and undimmed by time, Jean-Jacques Brousson has been the most successful. He lived in close intimacy with the Master for many years; he is himself endowed with critical faculty, with keen powers of observation and, like Anatole France, he has a leaning toward the aspect of life that puritans call the "unspeakable," but which the French call *"gauloiserie."* If *Anatole France Himself* is not a tribute of respect and of deference Anatole France's admirers would wish it to be, at least, it does more than any other book has done to convince us of the flesh-and-bone reality of the *savant*, to destroy the legend that he was heartless. M. Brousson has written a biography in everyday language, he has Boswellised his Master with fidelity, wit and a certain amount of irony and of mockery which Anatole France would probably have enjoyed and lauded. He has made him appear not only in the flesh, but in the spoken word, so that the reader is able to "listen in" and if he has an imagination vivid enough, he may believe that he is living in the shadow of Anatole France. M. Brousson tells of his first days of work at the Villa Saïd, of the tempers and tolerance of his master, of his simplicity and his sarcasm; of his generosity and his avarice; of his method of work and manner of play. The latter has a large place in this biography, especially the only sort of play in which Anatole France in his declining years could indulge: imagination and ratiocination. We see him at times like a sensuous and pleasure-bent faun; then he becomes the ascetic monk, with one hand raised to an imaginary heaven in which the wisdom of time and the wickedness of the world blend; now he is the writer, the historian, the novelist, intent on his

self-imposed task and working with industrious and painstaking love. Then he becomes the child, reprimanded by "Madame" because he refuses to tell a story with which she wishes to impress her audience, or because he procrastinates in writing an article for a Viennese newspaper; in turn he is the lover of antiques and the searcher after old "estampes"; then he is the disillusioned art-collector who finds that what his fancy believed to be genuine does not bear the stamp of antiquity, and who overwhelms his secretary with the objects that have ceased to please—generally in payment of his services. We like him best when he is shown to be a real man, with a heart and a nervous system reacting to emotional disturbance. "If you could only read in my soul," he said to his secretary one day, "you would be terrified."

"He takes my hands in his, and his are trembling and feverish. He looks me in the eyes. His are full of tears. His face is haggard. He sighs: 'There is not in all the universe a creature more unhappy than I. People think me happy. I have never been happy for one day, not for a single hour.' "

This reminds one of the text that Mark Twain constructed for his autobiography:

"A person's real life is led in his head, and is known to none but himself. All day long, and every day, the mill of his brain is grinding, and his thoughts, not those other things that are his history. His acts and his words are merely the visible, thin crust of his world with its scattered snow summits and its vacant wastes of water—and they are so trifling a part of his bulk; a mere skin enveloping it. The mass of him is hidden—it and its volcanic fires that toss and boil, and never rest, night nor day."

Anatole France hid his soul well: his volcano was frequently on the point of eruption, but nearly always he succeeded in smothering it.

Jean-Jacques Brousson has written a valuable exposition of Anatole France's personality, of the home and the semi-public life of his hero, and his intention to bring him as close and make him as familiar to us as he could is evident in the French title of *Anatole France Himself, Anatole France en Pantoufles.* This is the way in which we remember him most vividly, with his felt slippers lined with purple, and his multi-coloured skull cap.

Another of his admirers is Paul Gsell, who was a frequent and faithful visitor at the morning meetings at the Villa Saïd. Introduction to these famous "audiences" was not difficult to get—the difficulty was to get there a second time if the Master found the visitor a bore or a fool. He could suffer neither, unless they were hidden in the pulchritudinous envelope of an attractive woman—then everything was allowed and overlooked to leave place for admiration and gallantry. Paul Gsell has written *Anatole France and His Circle,* and his book reads like a court report, or a newspaper interview, withal it is full of the charm of the conversation of Anatole France, and of his unforeseen and original reactions to ideas and beliefs. Among a great many anecdotes and conversations which are interesting and instructive, the episode of Mr. Brown, the Australian "stout, robust man of florid complexion with close-shaven lips and chin," who wore gold-rimmed spectacles and who showed in his Anglo-Saxon elegance his assiduity to golf and polo, and who came to see Anatole France in search of the mystery . . . the secret of literary genius, is one of the most diverting. He may have found what he wanted, but his visit resulted, at all events, in a disclosure of literary geniuses of the past as studied by Anatole France which is remarkable in its scope and in its truth.

Paul Gsell's book has had imitators and it has given an incentive to assiduous followers of Anatole France to set down for posterity, some of the memorable conversations and discussions at which they were present. The most successful

has been Marcel Le Goff, who, in the last ten years of the Master's life, saw him at his country home near Tours, frequently and with increasing interest and admiration. He has recorded his talks, but fortunately, he could not resist the temptation of allowing us to peep into the intimacy of Anatole France, and into his life at "La Béchellerie." His tastes, and the trivialities which form part of every life, have been divulged and even though M. Le Goff is one of France's admirers, he has avoided Mr. Lewis May's pitfall and has not allowed his personal feeling to blind him absolutely:

"Perhaps M. France has had weaknesses; it would be sad to lay too much stress on them, to reveal them and to find pleasure in their recital. One might better see in him, the illustrious and permanent witness of the beauty of our language and of the genius of our people."

But the best biography of Anatole France is still the one he wrote himself, under guise of four novels, *Le Petit Pierre, Le Livre de Mon Ami, Pierre Nozière* and *La Vie En Fleur.* They reveal the formation of the clever novelist, of the profound thinker, of the cultured critic, of the great stylist. Style was his obsession and perfect expression of thought was his constant care; he reached the heart of his subject as few younger authors have done, and never left it until he had obtained all he could from it; surveying it from one angle, then from another, he saw its shades and meanings, and this explains some of his contradictions. Anatole France, partial as he was as a man, was impartial when he wrote of universally interesting and profoundly significant events.

By his allegiance to the teachings of the past, he deserved to be called the last of the classicists; by his fidelity in maintaining the traditions of novels, he is entitled to be called "romantic"; by his love for the perfect phrase, for purity of form and loftiness of sentiments, he proved himself a true son of the ancient masters; and by his keen appreciation of intelligence,

analysis and objectivity, he made a definite place for himself in the modern school. His mind has been influenced by the greatest minds of history and of literature. He adopted their thoughts, and adapted their interpretation of life to his own style, and he had neither scruples nor shyness in copying what had already been said: "When a thing has been said, and well said, have no scruples, take it. Give references? What for? Either your readers know where you have gathered the passage and the reference is useless, or else they do not know it, and you humiliate them by giving it." That was one tenet of his creed and many have said he lived up to it. He did, indeed, and for that reason posterity is likely to rate him as an interpreter more than as a creator, and to set him below men of real creative genius, such as Ibsen, Dostoievsky, or Chekhov.

We do not need Jean-Jacques Brousson to point out to us France's principal fault in his literary work. It is evident in all his books. He lacked a formulated plan, and had he had one, he probably would not have pursued it with the energy, determination and single-mindedness that Dostoievsky or Ibsen displayed. It was not his versatility that shortened his reach for the crown of glory, it was his distractibility. He could be diverted from a determination by whim, fancy, sentiment or appeal, and most of all by the bigotries, stupidities, vanities and selfishness of his people. He must hold them up to ridicule, lash them with stinging words, scorch them with scorn and sting them with sarcasm, before he could find peace in his "objets d'art," satisfaction in his bibelots, and contentment in contemplation of concrete beauty.

§

The star of Sainte-Beuve in the literary firmament of France shone brilliantly during his lifetime; since his death its luminosity has increased. Indeed, one may say that it has

become a sort of sun which lights the literary way with great brilliancy. Much has been written about Sainte-Beuve in the brief half-century since his death—brief because of the tremendous changes which have taken place in his country during that time and which have left relatively little leisure to discuss and estimate the influence and achievement of a contemporary. Moreover, the French are loath to commit themselves by placing a crown of immortality on the brow of their artists, before time and a certain unanimity of public opinion have confirmed the judgment of early admirers. Yet, in the case of Sainte-Beuve it was different. Immediately after his death he became for them the greatest critic of the nineteenth century—possibly the greatest of all ages. It has not been thought premature to attribute to him paternity of the modern school of criticism, represented by Rémy de Gourmont. In the early seventies, Matthew Arnold popularised Sainte-Beuve in England and reverberations of this publicity soon reached this country; but it is doubtful that he has the reputation here, especially among the younger writers, that he deserves.

Until recently the biography by Count d'Haussonville has been our most important document about Sainte-Beuve. It requires a delicate and refined pen to write about Sainte-Beuve and it requires an inborn distinction of mind and a responsiveness of heart such as d'Haussonville possessed to understand and render the aristocracy of Sainte-Beuve's art—the art of one who was above all an artist, with great intellectual powers at the service of his art, and who, not content with his natural endowments, took endless pains and by prodigious industry acquired vast learning.

And now we have another biography. A cultured and scholarly American has written the most voluminous life of Sainte-Beuve that has appeared in any language. Lewis Freeman Mott has gathered all the information that previous biographers have given; garnered the most minute details, elab-

orated and interpreted them. He has followed his subject from birth to death, minute by minute, with closest attention. Mr. Mott's *Sainte-Beuve* gives an impression of concentrated effort. He has worked close enough to the subject to detect nuances difficult to perceive, not close enough to hear the beating of the heart, and too close to comprehend, in one large inclusive sweep, the atmosphere, the local colour and the surroundings. It is a laboriously conceived study, painstakingly faithful, rigorously integral, but not alluring.

Mr. Mott is one of the few biographers to lay emphasis on Sainte-Beuve's artistic endowment, but even he has done it more in the letter than in the spirit. We wish that this last biographer had traced Sainte-Beuve's emotional reactions, instead of setting the finished work before us with no clue to its genesis and fabrication. We know that the French critic had more regard for good taste in literature than for talent; that he was constantly seeking truth, that he frowned on falsification of history and human nature; that he revolted against the unnatural, abhorred abstract language and found delight even in the most fugitive appearance of poetry, but all this we must divine, for Mr. Mott does not prove it. He states the case as it appears to him and is neither partisan nor judicial. He carries impartiality to the point of indifference.

In the days of Sainte-Beuve's early maturity, literary clans were the fashion in Paris, and the *Cénacle* of which he was one of the shining lights, together with Alexandre Dumas, Gérard de Nerval, Alfred de Vigny, Alfred de Musset and Victor Hugo, was one of the most fashionable. The young men who met there to discuss their ambitions, to find relaxation and stimulus and to air their views, were "strangely garbed, wearing a 'Merovingian prolixity of hair,' and were ferociously prepared to eat any stray Academician. They drank healths out of a skull, tore the green coat from the back of Dumas" and showed an effervescence and enthusiasm which has disappeared from the manners of modern writers. But the

Cénacle was short lived, and Mr. Mott has skilfully rendered the change of moods in Sainte-Beuve, whose enthusiasm took him along different channels after the crisis of 1830. He soon saw the danger of isolation, and of breaking up into groups; "literature must become broader, more profound, accessible to all. The time of the *Cénacle* is past; the Romantic reversion to the Middle Ages, the solitary inward revery, the detachment from reality" have been replaced by sentiment for progressive and struggling humanity. Sainte-Beuve then became revolutionary and proletarian, but lost none of his delicate and artistic powers.

Sainte-Beuve had the capacity to shift quickly from one viewpoint to the other, from one belief to another, from one political opinion to its antithesis. This is common enough in men of great emotional make-up, but it seldom goes with the sangfroid, the coolness, the good sense and the clear judgment that he displayed. In him, these sudden turns had their key in his emotions. He was sick at heart, a prey to the passion that first Madame Hugo, then other women inspired in him. In order to distract or benumb himself, he played with every conceivable sort of thought. In all his love affairs, he was ardent and sincere, and entered them without reserve or calculation. Though he sought relief from the passion that possessed him, his emotional disturbance was not allowed to interfere with his intellectual labour.

Mr. Mott should have taken the following quotation from Sainte-Beuve, pondered and meditated it, for within it lies the secret of great biographies:

"I have always been fond of the correspondence of great men, of their conversations, their thoughts, all the details of their character and manners, of their biography in short; and especially when this biography has not already been compiled by another, but may be composed and constructed by oneself. Shutting yourself up for a fortnight with the writing of some dead celebrity, some poet or philosopher, you study him, turn

him over and over, and question him at leisure; you make him pose for you; it is almost as though you passed a fortnight in the country making a portrait or a bust of Byron, Scott or Goethe; only you are more at ease with your model and the tête-à-tête at the same time that it requires strict attention, permits much closer familiarity. Soon, an individuality takes the place of the vague, abstract type. The moment the familiar motion, the revealing smile, the vainly hidden crack or wrinkle is seized, at that moment, analysis disappears in creation, the portrait speaks and lives, you have found the man."

Somehow the reader feels that Mr. Mott did not make Sainte-Beuve *pose* for him.

It was the man in Sainte-Beuve, not the intellectual, who broke with Victor Hugo and it was the jealousy of a human being, not the superiority of a poet, that made him hate Madame Hugo when his affair with her had lost its allurement. Mr. Mott has laid much stress on that affair, and some may question the taste that guided him in this phase of Sainte-Beuve's life; but it must be said that Mr. Mott is firm in his belief that there was more imagination, sentiment and words in the romance of the two lovers than reality. He believes that their love was based on a spiritual understanding, and one is inclined to agree with him after reading his remarks on Sainte-Beuve's inflamed state of mind, after becoming familiar with the behaviour of the characters in his only novel, *Volupté,* and after learning of the health of Madame Hugo. Mr. Mott contrasts skilfully the sort of affair in which Victor Hugo plunged with robustious frankness, with that of Sainte-Beuve and Madame Hugo, it makes the latter appear like the pretty frolics of adolescence.

Sainte-Beuve had a genuine flair for literature. He justified La Bruyère's dictum: "the test of a man's critical power is his judgment of contemporaries." *Les Lundis,* his greatest contribution to critical literature, shows rare discernment in picking literary winners. He was one of the first to express

doubts regarding the permanency of Chateaubriand's works, and this despite the affection he had for him, and his prominent place in the literature of the day. Mr. Mott's account of Sainte-Beuve's position in the salon of Madame Récamier, the guardian angel of the great men of her time, shows the biographer at his best. His description of the "salon" and of the charm of Madame Récamier are a fine bit of writing. Sainte-Beuve did not remain long under her influence. About the time he forsook social intercourse with her, he abandoned poetry and turned to criticism. The poet in him was perpetually in conflict with the critic, sentimentality trying to overcome reason. His heart was continually haunted by visions of romantic situations—but prose was a medium in which he was particularly happy, and to prose he remained faithful —prose and interpretation.

Occasionally, Mr. Mott rewards his readers for attention to arid pages of bibliography by giving them a piece of characterisation which is all the more welcome because of its rarity. Some critics, even Sainte-Beuve himself, have given the impression that he was devoid of merriment and of gaiety, but Mr. Mott has found traces of joyousness. "This gaiety is a note, unobtrusive though it be, that should not be omitted if we are to appreciate the full harmony of Sainte-Beuve's character. In spite of *Volupté* and certain poems, he was a normal human being, with plenty of faults and weaknesses, it is true, but sincere with himself and others, remarkably endowed, universally interested and indefatigably laborious." This is as near as Mr. Mott ever comes to letting us see behind the mask of the intellectual into the make-up of the man. But the biographer makes up for his lack of allurement with his profound and clear knowledge and understanding of *Port-Royal*, and some of his pages on it are not only the best in the book, but of the quality that makes literature.

Sainte-Beuve's *Port-Royal* is his most permanent contribution to literature, *Les Lundis* excepted. The summary Mr.

Mott makes of the book might apply to his own *Sainte-Beuve*:

"We would not convey the impression that the book is especially entertaining . . . to sit down and labour consecutively through the present volumes is somewhat of a task. We appreciate and we admire, but we not infrequently look ahead to discover how many more pages the chapter contains. An unregenerate appetite might be satisfied with a smaller quantity of this very plain spiritual nutriment."

We appreciate Mr. Mott's remarkable labour also; and we admire his mastery of the subject, but appreciation and admiration are not synonymous with entertainment.

Mr. Mott creates a relationship between Sainte-Beuve and La Rochefoucauld, and in the examples he has chosen to illustrate this similarity of their views, he has been successful. The former had a gift for imitation and he often took on the mentality of those he admired, so that many of their thoughts can be paralleled in their work. The same comparison might be made between Mr. Mott and his subject. He, like Sainte-Beuve, supplies his books copiously with summaries and with indications of location.

"Not infrequently, a chapter may open or close with a paragraph, much in the manner of Macaulay, telling us what the author is about to do, but rarely does Sainte-Beuve persist, like Macaulay, in a consecutive fulfilment of his prospectus. The side paths are too alluring for his truant disposition."

It is not a truant disposition that prompts Mr. Mott to follow the side paths, it is a laudable desire of going to the heart of his subject and presenting it as a whole, but the result is the same. Indeed, it may be said that the summary of the chapters in *Sainte-Beuve* is one of its greatest attractions, for it states in a few words the main points which the chapter never fails to develop.

Sainte-Beuve made enemies, but he did not fear them. His attacks on Balzac especially brought a suit for damages to the magazine in which he published his wrath, but the suit was mocked in an article which he undoubtedly wrote and which concluded: "He (Balzac) will find that we never in the least dreamed of contesting the *intrepidity* of his bad taste." Had Sainte-Beuve lived in this age, he would have the same grounds for indignation; for "systems of inward degeneration—emulation, self-esteem, charlatanism, log-rolling, intimidation, avidity for popularity and gold" still exist.

Artistic preoccupation was one of Sainte-Beuve's distinguishing characteristics. He joined art to literary criticism, giving his portraits creative value, and he does not renounce art when he speaks the truth. He believed in Chateaubriand and Lamennais, yet he told the truth about them, for believing with him was merely a way of understanding. And he insisted that literary criticism should never become static and dogmatic, but like art must remain dynamic and plastic. All this, Mr. Mott has explained clearly. And by so doing, he has written a book which will serve as a *vade mecum* to all students of Sainte-Beuve. It may not interest the general public for it lacks the divine spark which changes bread into manna, coal into diamonds. The picture he paints of Sainte-Beuve does not make those unacquainted with his writings want to read them; those who know and love Sainte-Beuve, know him and love him for the qualities which Mr. Mott's book has revealed.

§

Dr. Kaun, Professor of Slavic languages at the University of California, put the American reading public under obligations when he wrote Andreyev's biography. It is the best I have encountered since Mr. Janko Lavrin's psycho-critical study of Ibsen, and as it is more kindly, sympathetic and tol-

erant than that important contribution, it is pleasanter to read and quite as illuminating.

Next to Maxim Gorky, Leonid Andreyev is more widely known in this country than any recent Russian writer. Many of his novels, sketches and plays have been translated and some, such as *The Seven That Were Hanged, Satan's Diary, The Little Angel, Samson in Chains,* and various plays, have been extensively read.

The question has often been asked: "What kind of author was this soul-analyst, this student of the brute in man, this writer who caused more discord in the camp of Russian criticism than any of his fellows?" Mr. Kaun's book not only provides the answer but gives a glimpse of literary tendencies in the Russia of yesterday which is as welcome as it is instructive.

Leonid Andreyev was forty-eight years old when he died in 1919; although he began literary work soon after his admission to the bar in 1897, it was not until the publication of *Once There Lived* in 1901 that the critics had intimation that a new force had appeared in Russian literature. In the next fifteen years he won a place in the literary hierarchy of his country, which since his death has become more secure. When the history of Russia in the generation from 1895 to 1920 comes to be dispassionately and judicially written the name and influences of Leonid Andreyev will frequently be mentioned.

The Slav is an enigma to most Americans and the more we learn of Andreyev the less soluble seems the riddle. He was of the manic-depressive temperament; at least three times in his life he attempted suicide; he was addicted to strong drink; he had the naïveté and egotism of a child; he was mulishly obstinate. Maxim Gorky, who was one of the first to recognise his ability, who counselled and befriended him, has recently written: "Strangely, and to his own torment, Leonid split in two; in one and the same week he could sing

hosanna to the world and pronounce anathema against it." In this respect he resembled another writer of manic-depressive temperament, Giovanni Papini.

This lack of co-ordination in Andreyev's moods is continually shown by Dr. Kaun, who follows him through all the periods of his life. His childhood was gloomy, filled with serious thoughts and arid reading. At times he put aside all his interests in literature and became a "rough boy." He displayed a remarkable gift for the stage and an early inclination to draw and to paint. The death of his father, which occurred when Leonid was very young, gave him a taste of poverty, privation and humility and made him realise that his future was what he alone would make it. Soon after graduation he became a court reporter and then an editorial writer. Mr. Kaun devotes an instructive and interesting chapter to this plastic period, during which he displayed few indications of possessing constructive ability.

The transformation that Russia witnessed during the years of Andreyev's adolescence and early maturity must of necessity have influenced a mind such as his. He saw aristocracy fail to convince itself that slavery was legitimate; he saw the slow but constant development of a sentiment of democracy which soon extended to all branches of society and turned all eyes and sympathies to the peasantry.

They became the idols of the day in Russia; literature was concentrated around their activities and that new discovery, their souls. The Intelligentsia, to which Andreyev belonged, recognised and praised their long disdained brothers. In his introduction Dr. Kaun has expressed all this in clear and simple language; he has shown the tendencies of Russian literature with such authority and coolness that what seemed an abyss of darkness passing understanding becomes at once easy to penetrate. Some of his definitions dismiss the cloud of vagueness that before surrounded the object. "The term Intelligentsia may be applied to the unorganised group of Rus-

sian men and women who, regardless of their social or economic status, have been united in a common striving for the betterment of material and spiritual conditions."

When Russian literature became as it were "single tracked," when all its interests turned abruptly to the "street" (save for the exception of a few writers who refused to give up "art for art's sake" and take up the defence of any one class of society), the danger was that Russian literature would become "a didactic sermon." But Dr. Kaun hastens to reassure us that "What saved it . . . was the genius of its creators, who remained artists under all circumstances."

There was need, however, for a man who would not allow his passions to rule his emotions, whose voice could be heard and heeded above the popular outbursts, who would attempt a search into the motives and the value of life, and Leonid Andreyev was the man, the voice and the writer.

From his earliest childhood he had been obsessed by interrogations about life and he expressed them constantly in his writings; he seldom attempted an answer or a solution to the problems that pressed upon his mind, and when he did it, it was ambiguous. Dr. Kaun points out that Andreyev's failure to define or to classify was due to his lack of philosophical theory and to his incapacity for detaching himself and viewing life in perspective; he dwelled in the reality, and disdained philosophy and theories. He was neither a student nor a reader. He would have his friends believe that he had been influenced by Schopenhauer and there is no doubt that he showed envy of Nietzsche, affection for Tolstoi and admiration for Gorky; but it is doubtful that he read them, save casually.

One appealing quality in Dr. Kaun as a critic is his unbiased opinion; he allows neither his admiration for the author nor his sympathy for the man to influence his judgment. He seeks no excuse for Andreyev's lack of humour and lightness or for his egotism. He states his defects, and finds a reason

for his admitted eminence among modern authors in his realism, which makes him address the public not as a teacher or a reformer but as an observer from the rank and file, who related what he saw and did not draw conclusions. He was neither propagandist nor missionary.

Andreyev's aim was to describe man as he was, with all the repulsive instincts that make him a beast and all the qualities that identify him with divinity; but it was the worse side of human nature that chiefly appealed to him, and that he described at length. If we agree with Samuel Butler that "virtue has never yet been adequately represented by any who have had any claim to be considered virtuous," and that "it is the subvicious who best understand virtue. Let the virtuous people stick to describing vice—which they can do well enough," we must consider Leonid Andreyev the personification of virtue.

He stood aloof from literary circles, parties or affiliations all his life. Not even the revolution of 1905, which brought a split in the ranks of the intelligentsia, changed him; he retained his impersonal attitude, probing the conscience of man, "ringing his alarm bell" of man's vices, analysing life, and attempting to explain only its illusions. He continually peered beneath the surface and questioned the reactions of mankind, discovering vices where virtue seemed to lie. He was a firm believer in the power of ideas over the actions of an individual, and he has shown in *Thought* how one unaccountable impulse will ruin the career of a man.

Andreyev was nonconformist to the last degree. He refused consistently to give way to the public's tastes and held that sincerity was the first quality that one should find in an author. His sincerity was not to the taste of his readers. Andreyev neither approved of the "splendid isolation" of the Russian symbolists, decadents or other definite schools who refused to see beyond the limit of their ivory towers, nor did he join hands with the people. He confined his observations to their

individual and immediate surroundings. But he also generalised events and expressed opinions that included the world in connection with an event that merely affected his country or his people. He extracted the essence of upheavals and carried them beyond his time. His passionate and ardent pen could describe horrors and cruelty better than the pen of any author of his time.

The thing that strikes one most forcibly in reading of Andreyev is the very brief period of his creative activity, fifteen years at the most. After 1902 his writings were merely repetitions or elaborations of former themes and his premise was always the same; a negative attitude toward man, life, human intellect and institutions. He involuted early, and the proof of it in his writing was that he no longer looked in the direction of hope and encouragement. He was like a man who hurries on an unfamiliar road hoping that he will arrive at a safe and comfortable stopping place before the darkness which is fast approaching enshrouds him. He became aware that his thinking faculties that once were brilliant had lost their flexibility: "I feel as though I were in a grave up to my waist." "I am thinking of suicide, or is suicide thinking of me?" "I am living in a jolly little house with its windows opening on a graveyard"—these are entries in his diary that indicate his increasing melancholy. But this was not his only cross; he lacked money for the basic need of life. He was on the point of coming to this country "to combat the Bolsheviki, to tell the truth about them with all the power within him and to awaken in America a feeling of friendship and sympathy for that portion of the Russian people which is heroically struggling for the rejuvenation of Russia," when he died of arteriosclerosis, as his friend, admirer and interpreter, Mr. Herman Bernstein, wrote in a letter to the New York *Times*.

A worthy biography of a great writer; it has the fascination of fiction and the satisfaction of fact.

§

Contrast of Ford Madox Ford's book on Joseph Conrad with Henry Festing Jones' book on Samuel Butler will show the difference between inspired and studious writing. One is life, the other is death; one is clay into which the breath of life has been breathed, tenuous, elastic, receptive, emissive; the other is inanimate, inert, rigid, and crumbles when you handle it.

Mr. Ford has megalomania and glories in it. He has systematised delusions of grandeur to which his conduct conforms. He believes he is, and has been in his generation, the finest stylist in the English language and he expresses himself as if convinced that not only did he teach Joseph Conrad to write, but that the renown of the romancer was due in large measure to his collaboration. They are harmless delusions and do not interfere one jot or tittle with my enjoyment of his books. Indeed, as he grows older and fatter he writes better and better. Few contemporary English writers could excel *Some Do Not* . . . , none save possibly Cunninghame Graham could equal *Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance.* I am moved to that statement after reading Mr. Galsworthy's tribute.

The Joseph Conrad that Mr. Ford presents may not be the Conrad that Mr. Galsworthy, Mr. Doubleday, Mrs. Jones, or Mrs. Smith knew, but I am convinced that he would be pleased that I should know him as his alleged friend depicts him.

"A biography should be a novel." That seems fair, since most novels are biographies. Mr. Ford has written a novel about Joseph Conrad and he has achieved a work of art. It will have the same effect upon readers as Rodin's sculptures have upon searchers for æsthetic stimulation or appeasement. Some will be moved to smash, others will be thrilled. All will admit merit. It is an informative, not a documented, book, informative of a soul, not a body; it tells not how many days

he lived and where he lived, but how he lived and thought; how he dreamed and loved; how he interpreted men's conduct and how he shaped his own. The work is a remembrance, a logical unfolding of Joseph Conrad as he appeared to Mr. Ford from the first days of their acquaintance to the last. We are told little about Conrad's political, religious, and social ideas. Mr. Ford was no more curious to know what his friend's past was than we are to know that an English dramatist made a shapeless play out of one of Mr. Ford's novels. Yet the latter episode becomes important when we learn that this, and Mr. Ford's interest in the publication of a review, were the cause of the only "scolding" he ever got from Conrad. Forbearing and forgiving Conrad, diffident and reticent Mr. Ford!

The life of a man is an open book for no one, not even for himself. The characteristics and peculiarities of Conrad intrigued his biographer from the beginning. He binds them with tenuous threads to Conrad's hereditary traits and the influence of his environment, and finally presents the picture complete, allowing his readers to draw their own conclusions.

Joseph Conrad, according to the portrait, was not the sort of man about whom a conclusion could be readily reached; and when it was, you could not bank on it. He was of cosmopolitan appearance: considerable British insularity, but more Slav and Eastern in his makeup. He gave the impression of a Frenchman, born and brought up in Marseilles! His hatreds seem to have exceeded his loves, but his life was a contradiction of his tastes and he has more friends than enemies. Mr. Ford avows that Conrad hated the sea and disliked to write. *"Un métier de chien,"* he used to call it. When he had made up his mind to write for a living, he had his choice of three languages: he discarded Polish instantly, French with a sigh of regret which he never overcame, and decided on English. And he hated English as a medium of prose, even more than he hated the sea! He thought in French, sometimes in Polish,

never in English, unless his thoughts were confined to the most common of everyday commonplaces; when they occupied a higher sphere they were always in French. It was because of the difficulty with which Conrad was constantly confronted that he first thought of collaborating with one who was reputed to be "the finest stylist in the English language."

Mr. Ford does not marvel at Conrad's desire to write in English, despite the fact that he knew French so much better. Ford himself writes French better than he does English, not that he knows it better—he does not—but because "in English, he can go gaily on, exulting in his absolute command of the tongue; he can write like Ruskin or like the late Charles Garvice, at will." In writing, but not in speaking French, he must pause for a word; it is in pausing for a word that the salvation of all writers lies. The proof of prose is in the percentage of right words—not the precious word; not even the startlingly real word. That we might have a whole book on Mr. Ford without a word about any one else!

Mr. Ford bears heavily on their collaboration, and one unfamiliar with the writings of the two authors might gather that Mr. Ford was the *fons et origo* of much of Conrad's work. I have no doubt that Conrad put an appreciative valuation on Mr. Ford's assistance, but I have the same certainty that he did not evaluate it as did his biographer.

Some will think that Mr. Ford has lately had a bad quarter of an hour reading a recent number of *La Nouvelle Revue Française* which is devoted wholly to Conrad. There, his colleagues and admirers, French and English, tell of Conrad's personality and his writings but never a word of his "collaborator." Water enters a duck's back a thousand times more penetratingly than failure to accord him what he believes to be his right penetrates the dura mater of Mr. Ford Madox Ford.

Stephen Crane said, "You must not be offended by Hueffer's manner. He patronises Mr. James, he patronises Mr.

Conrad. Of course, he patronises me, and he will patronise Almighty God when they meet, but God will get used to it, for Hueffer is all right." We are ready to agree with Stephen Crane even after we read as an antithesis that the words in which Henry James always referred to Mr. Ford were *"votre ami, le jeune homme modeste."*

Conrad's life revolved around his books, he was constantly occupied with the best manner in which to introduce a character of fiction. It was necessary to get the character in with a strong impression, and then work backward and forward over his past; this theory was the result of thought and experiment on the part of the collaborators. In the same manner, they devised the best opening for each type of writing; their theory was that the opening paragraph of book or story should be of the tempo of the whole performance, so that the ideal novel should begin either with a dramatic scene or with a note that should suggest the entire book. They agreed that style has no other use than to make the work interesting. Hence, they sought to render their thought in the manner which appeared the most sincere and interesting, not to make a display of erudition or of cleverness, or of juggling with words.

Mr. Ford's book is adorned with flights into the land of constructive writing, and there is much to learn from the theories and principles expressed on the authority of both Joseph Conrad and Mr. Ford. For, there is no denying that the latter's style is fluent and clear, picturesque enough to be original yet kept constantly within the bounds of pure English. Mr. Ford says that their greatest admiration for a stylist in any language was given to W. H. Hudson, of whom Conrad said that his writing was like the grass that the good God made to grow—when it was there, one could not tell how it came. The consensus of opinion however would seem to be that Conrad got his greatest inspiration from Turgenev.

Conrad's philosophy was résuméd in one word, "fidelity."

He was faithful in his adhesion to Herrick's maxim: To live merrily and trust to good letters. He never believed in using novels as a medium of preaching; if his standards of morality suffered from some of his heroes' breaches, he would create one who would express the opinions Conrad might have been willing to express himself. Thus did Conrad expound his beliefs anonymously, and because he was a gentleman he always created another hero who would refute the preacher's arguments. His belief was that one of the most important qualities for a novelist to cultivate was humility, to make himself as little conspicuous as possible to the reader.

Mr. Ford has a heart. Unlike his mind, it is assiduously concealed, but it pierces through the coarse envelope of the purely intellectual interest to which he attempts to confine his biography of Joseph Conrad. None of his memoir may be true, but that does not detract from it as a work of art. He shows no trace of real emotion, and his remembrances carry with them no suggestion of the broken heart which some authors would have assumed had they been writing on the same subject with the material Mr. Ford had at his disposal. His book, whether biography or autobiography, is a beautiful tribute to the man he liked and the author he loved. He says that there never was a word of spoken affection between them, never a personal note which would have revealed to either the inner sentiment the other entertained for his collaborator and playmate. But if Mr. Ford will never know what were Conrad's feelings for him, readers of the biography will know that Mr. Ford's book found its first inspiration in his heart, and, shaped by his affection, found expression in his intelligence. The duty which prompted him to write it was one of love, and the real sentiment, never expressed in words, is constantly watching over the author's shoulder.

My disappointment in Mr. Ford's book is the treatment of Conrad's art. Conrad had a form of realism that was nearly unique, blended with an impressionism that was at once capti-

vating and awesome. Colours, sounds, voices, visions, atmospheres, are manipulated to make a harmony and an effectiveness that are sometimes overwhelming, always stirring. He accomplished realism through impressionism, and in this he was as nearly original as one can be in literature. Then he had another great merit; he did not draw conclusions about his characters. He submitted the evidence without plea or prejudice, the reader renders the verdict. He saw life as it is, and man as he wishes to be, and he took them both in at a glance, just as Marlow did in *Chance*. He registered them and in his hectic leisure reproduced them, and thus made posterity his debtor. And Fidus Ford has made us his debtors for showing Conrad as he appeared to him. I have no doubt he was quite a different Conrad to Stephen Crane, John Galsworthy, Mr. Doubleday, and Mrs. Conrad, but not more lovable and not more worthy of the admiration the whole literary world gives him to-day.

§

Mr. Hugh l'Anson Fausset, whose English reads like translation from the French and who handles polysyllabic words as a juggler handles gilded balls, has made a study of the seventeenth century's poet and divine, that is sure to be widely read by the cultured public and to provoke discussion and dissension. He calls his book *A Study in Discord* and it purports to depict the conflict that went on in Donne, throughout his whole life, between the physical and the spiritual impulses of his nature. Mr. Fausset's thesis is that neither as poet nor preacher did Donne succeed in resolving these discords. He enjoyed neither physical nor spiritual harmony but was torn in strife between his intelligence and his impulses. The Christian ideal acted as a poison on the natural man in process of proving a purge. Self-consciousness was the only discipline by which his egoism might learn the wis-

dom of selfishness. The tale of that battle was Donne's legacy to literature.

"His style, whether as poet or preacher, never achieved either the fresh effusive gaiety, or the assured serenity of absolute Beauty. He could not create beauty out of life; he could not even see the beauty in which the limbs of life were veiled which flamed through and over the bleak anatomy of fact, consecrating the perishable dust and redeeming it of squalor and grossness."

It is the verdict of a judge, not of a jury and Mr. Fausset can not expect that the world of letters will receive it without protest. But he cites with skill and adroitness the evidence on which it is based, holding Donne up in the successive phases of Pagan, Pensioner and Preacher. Were he more advocate than judge he might have added Penitent, for the sake of both alliteration and fuller justice, for the death of the poetic dean was artistic to a high degree and in the last months of his life after he had preached his last sermon, "Unto the Lord belong the issues of Death," he achieved an absolute harmony of his life in the ebb-tide. The strings of his character then vibrated with small amplitude in unison.

Donne may be a study in discord, but there is nothing of discord in the writing of Fausset. He uses Donne as a peg on which to hang his concrete thought, and his organised ideas of nature, philosophy and religion. While it is a biography it is also a series of essays in which the vagaries, character and personal appearance of his subject are used to point the moral and adorn the tale. It is never left to the reader to form his own opinion of Donne, his life or his acts; for Fausset blares facts about the motive and the soul and his trumpet gives forth no uncertain sound. Even when Donne in a verse letter to a friend states, "and with vain outward things be no more moved," Fausset immediately states "yet excessive solitude can so affect a character like Donne's that only a restoration

of 'vain outward things' can save it from myopia or even madness."

It required courage to write the life of a man who furnished the material for a masterpiece of English biography. Izaak Walton's affection for his friend transported him to immoderate commendation of the events of his career, but Mr. Gosse's *Life and Letters of John Donne* is just and true. It will immortalise the personality of the poet, just as his somatic features will be perpetuated by the picture in a shroud he so studiously had made.

Fausset can not credit the picture of Donne given by the "gentle Walton" for the reason that Walton wrote on Donne in the spirit of love and admiration. Fausset writes of him neither with love nor hate, but with the scalpel always in hand, dissecting, getting beneath the surface. He is not the tender physician, he is the scientist at work in the laboratory of research with Donne as the cadaver. There is a charm, a beauty, and at times a poetic fervour of expression in the writing which reminds one of the Essay on Shelley by Francis Thompson. One can not help feeling that Donne was doomed from the first if we believe the picture painted of him with unerring hand by Fausset.

But Mr. Fausset is a student and exponent of personality and it is as such that we should estimate his work. Judged by the two studies that he has published: the one under consideration and *Keats; A Study in Development,* he has insight, sound psychology and a logical mind. With years he will grow more kindly and less turbulent. Meanwhile he shall have the benefit of our prayers that the happy day may hasten.

As Mr. Fausset sees him, John Donne was physically a genius, intellectually "possessed"; one who ranged almost every scale of experience, and upon each struck some note: harsh, cunning, arrogant or poignant, which reverberates down the roof of time; a poet who was at times near a monster, full-

blooded, cynical and gross; a thinker, curious, ingenious and mathematical; a seer brooding morbidly over the dark flux of things; a saint aspiring to the celestial harmony. He served the flesh with the same ardour with which he sought the ideal. He was a sensualist and a thinker, a poet and a priest, a pagan and a Christian. More than any contemporary he reflected the three aspects of life which met in confused association in seventeenth century England: Mediævalism, the Renaissance and the Reformation. The physical, intellectual and spiritual elements each in turn dominated his personality. The purpose of his life was to bring this trinity of forces into harmony and by so doing discover a new and deeper unity in the Universe itself. It is Mr. Fausset's belief that he did not succeed in this purpose but the tortured history of such a genius lays bare the potentialities of humanity and of civilisation. His life was one long battle with death: the death of physical grossness and mental conceit, of worldly ambition and spiritual complacence. He had explored the secret of the senses and the subtleties of the mind. And so, psychologist and sensualist as he was, he was competent in the later days of his spirituality to report adequately of the soul. He related poetry to religion, and religion to truth, and he showed us how to relate ourselves to God. His life teaches us that spiritual satisfaction is unworthy of the name, if it be achieved at the sacrifice of intellectual honesty and that religious experience is the prize of perpetual conflict. Such is the man that Mr. Fausset has composited from the creations of Walton, Gosse, Chambers and Grierson.

John Donne was born in London in 1573 and died there in 1631. His life was a stormy one, tempestuous in youth, squally in maturity, blusterous in old age. Calm overtook him but a few weeks before his death. He was a neurotic individual and his neural disequilibrium is testified by his portraits and by his conduct. A portrait of him made at the age of nineteen shows a brow slightly receding and narrowing at the

temples, prominent eyes, gigantic nose coarsely flattened at the base, thick lips and pointed chin. His resistance to emotional influences was defective and he reacted strongly to inner as well as to outer influences. From boyhood there was lack of equanimity in the development of the psychic personality although his intellect made him always a conspicuous figure and he "pursued mathematics, law or theology with the same tenacious passion as an ephemeral liaison." He was combative, satirical, arrogant, Sybaritic, Dionysiac. The sap did not ascend his tree of life gently or harmoniously; it gushed upward, often geyser-like, drenching conventions and submerging morality. He insisted upon licence to do as he pleased and clamoured for freedom and promiscuity, especially in love.

> "Who ever loves, if he do not propose
> The right true end of love, he's one that goes
> To sea for nothing but to make him sick."

He, like St. Paul, believed that woman is the glory of the man and was created for him, and he had a contempt for women's vaunted constancy.

> "Foxes, and goats—all beasts—change when they please.
> Shall woman, more hot, wily, wild than these,
> Be bound to one man . . . ?"

But he was soon to encounter one who was not polyandrous. Anne Moore, in a period of sixteen years, bore him twelve children. He was about thirty years old when he married her. The literary fecundity of his third decade is represented by *Songs and Sonnets* and *Elegies*. Mr. Fausset is probably correct in his claim that the poetry of Donne's early maturity was, like Goethe's, a reflection and refraction of his loves. Donne's contention was that sex neither can be nor should be transcended and the *Elegies* are his earnest of it.

But his moral nature was awakening even before he met Anne and he began to question:

"Why should our clay
Over our spirits so much sway
To tie us to that way?"

And he denied that he had formerly protested

"Change is the nursery
Of music, joy, life and eternity."

The manner in which he broke with the nameless lady whose husband was a deformed man and was stationary all day in a basket-chair, affords Mr. Fausset an opportunity to discharge some verbal pyrotechnics, and to disgorge some righteous wrath. "So, at last, he turned upon the poor woman, whom so short a time before he had bent to his purpose with a militant ardour and a shameless licence. The cold and cruel cynicism, the elemental spite of his last farewell to one who must at least have given as much as she received, has no parallel in our literature. In truth, no one is so ruthlessly vindictive, so callous to every claim of sentiment and generosity as the moralist new risen from the ashes of the brute." He then quotes "The Apparition" in which Donne taunts her as "feign'd vestal" and threatens one day to square accounts with her. It was not a pretty letter but Mr. Fausset is likely a very chivalric man and "brute" is scarcely justified.

Donne married in haste but never repented, probably because Anne never questioned her husband or tried to improve him.

The first years of their married life were lean. Parental blessing was slow in coming, and slower still was paternal allowance. But they both came and soon after conversion. "Anne Moore served as the bridge which Donne, at least as

the lover, climbed from the abyss to the cheerful daylight and even to a homely eminence." As the fruit of his passion for his mistresses had been disgusted cynicism, that of his devotion to his wife was ecstatic platonism, which now became reflected in his poetry.

Mr. Fausset takes us through the fourth decade of his life, documenting the transformation that took place in his soul from cynicism to platonism, from realist to mystic, from Catholicism to Protestantism, by quotations from his poetry, by pen pictures of his friends, particularly Mrs. Herbert who was "an idyllic retreat of sanity and piety and sympathy in a sultry world" and by descriptions of his reactions to illness, "illness the sword of God." His religious conversion was the important thing and these are the words that Mr. Fausset uses to describe its onset:

"The young Dionysus, who had broken from the restraints of Rome, seeking his way back to some primal ecstasy, which conventions seemed at best to adulterate, was now attempting to translate his ecstasy into ideas. He had turned at first to those tortured saints of the Dark Ages in whom sensuality and science melted into mysticism, and then to the pure but tenuous conceptions of Plato. But not for him were those enchanted bridals of the soul with God, of the mind with Beauty, in which the body passed away in flame or in smoke. There was too much of the satyr in his seership, and of the casuist in his mysticism. His branches might strain up heavenward but they never forgot their native earth. His only hope was to subdue his lawlessness to logic, until the two, blended together in a rational whole, achieved an equilibrium between mind and body as he had already discovered for his passions."

Rome suffocated him and Protestantism seemed a pallid, political compromise, but thanks to frequent prayers, to use his own words, he effected the transition. Donne succeeded in generating the spiritual from the struggle of the rational with the natural, and by so doing Mr. Fausset believes he waged a

battle of human consciousness two hundred years in advance of his time.

The turn of the tide in Donne's worldly affairs dated from 1610 when he wrote a poem, "The Funeral Elegy," commemorative of the charms and potentialities of a girl whose death had resulted from a box on the ear administered by her adoring father. It was a shot in the dark on the part of Dr. Donne but he "got" his man. Sir Robert Drury provided him a home for three years, then took him abroad. These were years of spiritual growth, emotional equilibrium and physical exhilaration. Soon after his return he took Holy Orders and after much manœuvring, King James, before whom he preached his first sermon, capitulated. His worldly fortunes were assured. It now only remained to make his heavenly ones.

Mr. Fausset indulges in one of his frequent rhetorical rhapsodies in describing Donne's first appearance under the stole:

"The figure who mounted the pulpit in these early days of his ministry was not the spectral divine, the emaciated, almost sardonic mystic, who was later to hypnotise his audience by the reverberations of his eloquence, the intensities of his imagination, and the sepulchral tones of his voice. He was a man, despite the ravages of ill-health, still in his prime, his beard indeed touched with grey, but his face and carriage retaining that air of buccaneering insolence, almost of dignified roguery, which we have remarked in the young man. Arrayed in vestments and uplifted by the sense of an august occasion, his appearance must have been singularly striking, suggesting indeed some challenging John the Baptist or one of Dürer's swarthy evangelists. At the same time he did not forget the courtier in the priest. There was a 'sacred flattery' in his address, which if it 'beguiled men to amend,' also gratified their vanity. His learning was beyond dispute, but the crabbed style of his correspondence, no less than the angular conceits of his poetry, could scarcely have prepared his friends for the miracle of eloquence which he was speedily to achieve, pungent, rhythmical, varied, and, even in its passages of scholastic argument, strangely sinuous and compelling."

It is Donne's spiritual life that his latest biographer finds worthy of unstinted praise, and it is perhaps for that reason that Part Four of his book entitled *The Preacher* will be found least interesting by the general reader.

Although his friend Izaak Walton wrote: "Donne's marriage was the remarkable error of his life," it is difficult to believe him. Anne put out the fire of his concupiscence though it cost her her life, and from its ashes his soul arose. After her death, he withdrew from the world and "in this retiredness," Walton writes, "which was often from the sight of his dearest friends, he became crucified to the world and all those vanities, those imaginary pleasures that are daily acted on that ruthless stage; and they were as perfectly crucified to him. Now his soul was elemented of nothing but sadness; now grief took so full possession of his heart as to leave no place for joy; if it did, it was a joy to be alone, where, like a pelican in the wilderness, he might bemoan himself without witness or restraint, and pour forth his passions like Job in the days of his affliction." It was through an agony of remorse that Donne strove for harmony of body and mind. He preached to others to express and reassure himself. Mr. Fausset believes that his exhortation "was not the flower of any abstract love of humanity," but of intense personal preoccupation.

Preaching did not provide an adequate vent for his emotions so again he turned to poetry which, in keeping with his spiritual integration, he now cast in sonnet form. In these sonnets, Donne was primarily absorbed in asserting his emancipation from worldly values, and lamenting past sin. Mr. Fausset sees him "wooing his God with both the fervour and the self-disgust with which he had before addressed his mistresses"; even the erotic imagery recurs. His religion had become a personal passion and a personal hazard to which theology was no more than a prop. Of the many judgments his interpreter has passed upon him, this is the fairest.

Serious illness thrust itself upon him soon after his promo-

tion to the deanship of St. Paul's. Even in those days, before "nervous breakdown" was fashionable and a euphemism for episodic mental disorder, it was attributed to overwork and emotional tension, two very rare causes of disease. But he began to be seriously ill, ill of the disease that twelve years later conditioned his death. Before Mr. Gosse published his biography of Donne, he submitted the facts of his illnesses to a London diagnostician who satisfied himself that it was malignant disease of the stomach. But in 1899 when that diagnosis was made, we knew practically nothing about the most insidious, and the most prevalent form of chronic sepsis: that which has its origin in the tonsils and teeth. With the temerity of one whose statement can not be disproven, I boldly assert that, had his tonsils been removed after the alleged attack of typhoid fever and his teeth X-rayed when he felt himself at forty-five lapsing into an infirm and valetudinarian state, he would have lived out the time allotted by the psalmist. Had he been vouchsafed these natural years of piety and preparation, he would have accomplished that synthesis of the physical and spiritual which Mr. Fausset denies him, and the world would not have had *The Devotions* in which Donne incorporated the features and fears of his illness. England waited three hundred years for some one to parallel his performance of clinical self-observation and then found it in the young man who under the pen name of W. N. P. Barbellion wrote a book as self-revelatory as the *Confessions of Saint Augustine.*

Donne came to many fertile oases in his travel through the desert of sin, to many pools of Bethesda in wading the rivers of disease. The Herbert family was the most refreshing and restoring. In George Herbert, fifteen years his junior, he saw what he would like to have been; and in Herbert's mother, he saw his ideal of spiritual womanhood. "The Autumnal," his poem of homage to Magdalen Herbert, embodies his idea of the platonism of the soul as distinct from that of the mind. Through it, there breathes, as Mr. Fausset says, a quiet, ten-

der as the evening sky before it has begun to pale with premonition of night.

Donne devoted the last five years of his life to dying, and he did it with the same intensity and artistry as that with which he devoted the first five years of his maturity to living. He interpreted himself the seventeenth-century representative of him that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias and bent himself to the last atom of his strength to make straight the Lord's paths. It is a stirring and touching narrative and Mr. Fausset has made the most of it; reading it, one is forced to agree that he has established his contention that Donne never achieved a harmonious conscience; for, even in his hours of profoundest religiosity, he was dependent in a measure upon intuition for his faith; the dread of death, and the doubt of God's mercy were constantly recurring, even though he maintained the priestly attitude with outward calm and enviable courage. In the years of his wisdom he did his best to crucify nature and to implore grace from Him who suffered crucifixion that man might live eternally.

His whole life was a series of *beaux gestes* and the last the most picturesque. Standing upon an urn, with closed eyes and folded hands, shrouded as for the grave, he had his portrait painted. And of that portrait his latest biographer says:

"It was a face at once grotesque and sublime, sinister and sanctified, fiendish and devout; seared and purified, cynically ecstatic. The craftiness and arrogance of his youth were sobered into a hungry, a cadaver simper, while his mysticism seemed to glimmer through the shadowy hollows with a phosphorescent life."

For Mr. Fausset, Donne reflects and condenses the long labour of the man to outgrow the beast and approach the divine. In his unrest we see our own reflected.

This *Study in Discord* puts Mr. Fausset in the class of biographers at whose head stands Mr. Lytton Strachey. The

reader may be annoyed by his obvious inimicality to the realistic strain in Donne's character; he may be wearied by the turbulence of his exposition, but he can not fail to realise that in reading this book he is companioning a man of education, imagination, sentiment and vision, though his heart sometimes dominates his head.

Throughout the biography we capture as interesting a revelation of the mind of Fausset as we do of Donne, and his desire in writing the biography is summed up in one sentence in the epilogue, "And this soul is worthy of all honour; for though defeated it never accepted a fraudulent peace."

The reader who knows of Donne from Campbell's British Poets will, after reading Mr. Fausset's book, be likely to agree that "the life of Donne is more interesting than his poetry." It is indeed, and it becomes more interesting after each biographer has had his turn at it. The last word has not yet been said but the best that has been said is the last.

§

Thomas Burke, a young Britisher who has familiarised readers of English with the East End of London and its motley inhabitants, who writes about unclean things in a clean way and of vicious people wholesomely, and who has rare talent for creating literary atmosphere, calls his biography *The Wind and the Rain*. Next to Mr. Anderson's story it is the most captivating narrative that I have read in a long time. Scarcely are these words written before pages of the *Memoirs of an Editor* by Edward P. Mitchell are reflected in the mirror of memory.

Thomas Burke says nothing of his parents; I fancy he did not know them. His first recollections are of his uncle, a gardener with a sense of humour, and of a Chinese with an appearance of mystery who was later deported because he trafficked in opium and morals. He got from the latter what

THOMAS BURKE

Dostoievsky got from epileptic attacks: a sense of time arrested, crystallised; a sense of eternity; a fancy that always, behind the curtain of time, the joy of the moment had been. The secret that Pater attributed to Mona Lisa he learned from Quong Lee. Though Tommy was but ten years old, he knew all the beauty and all the evil of the heart of Asia: its cruelty, its grace, its wisdom. And the contact generated a writer, for from his sixteenth year he has been animated by a single motive: to express in writing one moment in a London side street. He has not yet succeeded to his own satisfaction. As Marcel Proust seeks to revive the memories and reveries associated with incidents and experiences of childhood and youth, Mr. Burke struggles to make come again "the pins-and-needles sensation in the back of my neck" and to have the soul feeling that accompanied it when Quong Lee beckoned him to his shop and gave him a piece of ginger.

Mr. Burke's life seems to have been without remarkable event. He stalked poverty, and he fell in love with a snob who had an understanding friend of her own sex who shared a flat with her; he made a half-hearted attempt to get on in the City and a whole-hearted one to be a bohemian; and he saw the seams of the seamy side of life burst wide open now and then. But he also met men with hearts, like Mr. Creegan who gave him his first leg-up. This benefactor rescued him from *une maison de joie et de jeux* where he cleaned boots and ran errands after he left the orphanage; fed him, clothed him, lodged him, got him a job, and started him on the road that led to hobnobbing with Caruso and reminiscing in Monaco. And he met Gracie Scott. If he treated Gracie as he says in his book he did, it will be one of the sweetest memories of his life when that of Cicely shall have gone forever and that of Cosgrove shall have faded.

One of the many precious lies that grown-ups like to tell themselves is that the days of their youth were happy days. Mr. Burke is not addicted to that sort of story-telling. "I had

little happiness then, partly because I was young, and partly because I had no friends, no money, bad food, and no hope. There was just one thing I had then which belongs to all youth, however miserable. Though utterly joyless, I had a tremendous *capacity* for joy." One may share that tremendous capacity—for he still has it—by reading *The Wind and the Rain.*

§

> "It is better to be beggared out of hand by a scapegrace nephew, than daily hag-ridden by a peevish uncle."
>
> R. L. S.

Mr. John A. Steuart has written two large volumes to explain our legacy from Robert Louis Stevenson, which was "a delightful contribution to the romantic literature of the world and an example of courage that will continue to inspire men to remote generations."

A generation has come and gone since Stevenson died. Of the one now on the threshold even those gifted with imagination and those who understand the impulsiveness of their countrymen, will find it difficult to understand the esteem in which he was held in America in the beginning of the present century. To form any conception of the appreciation, praise and adulation that were bestowed on his writings, they will have to turn to contemporary criticism.

The British "discovered" Stevenson after we revealed him, but when it came to approbation they surpassed us. Then there was an earthquake in the literary world. Henley, the intimate of his early maturity and the doughty champion of his genius, who more than any one else made a public for him, published an article in the *Pall Mall Magazine* which seemed to give the *coup de grâce* to Stevenson as a great writer. The blow glanced off Stevenson and stunned Henley; the spectators howled and called the latter traitor, and ghoul. When the ex-

citement subsided dispassionate witnesses reflected upon the matter. Some of them were moved to re-read Stevenson. Others to read him for the first time. The result was that devotees of Stevenson grew less numerous. However, when in 1914 a temperate and generous critic, a novelist of established reputation, Frank Swinnerton, published a critical study of Stevenson which was adverse to his candidacy to immortality, it precipitated a shower of abuse, less inundating than that which submerged Henley, but still disagreeable. However, since that time, indiscriminate adulation of Stevenson has given place to critical estimation. The result to-day is that most judges agree with Swinnerton that it is no longer possible for a serious critic to place him among the great writers because in no department of letters—save the boy's book and the short story—has he written work of first class importance. His latest biographer would seem to agree, though it is difficult to say just what Mr. Steuart believes, for his writing is so overladen with verbiage, so surcharged with platitudes, so interpolated with irrelevancies and so replete with alleged inside information that one can not see the wood for the trees. But he does not agree that Stevenson was not a "great" man for when "he is summed up, when his qualities, mental and moral, have been analysed and tabulated, it will be found that a superb courage crowns all and from that master-quality flows other virtues in which he was conspicuous—chivalry, generosity, love of justice, an eager humanity, a passion for the happiness of the race. It is valour more than aught else that enchants, inspires, and endears him to the people of two hemispheres." Probably no one will contest Mr. Steuart's statement, but surely it is an extraordinary reason for a critical biography. No one would think of writing a life of Meredith or of Heine because they displayed courage that excites our envy and elicits our admiration. Was the courage of Heine or of Meredith inferior to that of Stevenson and what was the quality of Stevenson's that made it so distinguished?

Heine had a disease which, at the time, was never known to end in recovery, Stevenson had only a disease (so far as his latest biographer seems to know) that frequently is cured and nearly always tends to quiescence when given half a chance. Why has John Addington Symonds' courage not been estimated properly as an asset of greatness?

In truth Mr. Steuart takes himself too seriously. He has not advanced Stevenson's reputation an atom. Mr. Graham Balfour's biography of Stevenson may be a barley-sugar effigy of him, and it may make him out a seraph in chocolate as Henley claimed, and the portrait may have been touched up to please the family as Mr. Steuart maintains, but taken in connection with Mr. Swinnerton's book, Miss Masson's *Life*, and the publications of the Bibliophile Society of Boston, it is a competent account of his life and accomplishments.

There is a feature of Stevenson's personality that has never been touched upon, but which, now that Mr. Steuart has woven a crown of oak leaves for him, must be discussed, and that is his infantilism. It was his curse as it was in a large measure his shame. It showed itself in many ways: in his relationship to his mother, to Alison Cunningham, "Cunny, my second mother," to Lady Colvin and to his wife; in his speech, dress, manner and imitativeness; in his gestures; in his emotional reactions and determinations; and more than anything else in his inability to display common sense and ordinary prudence. He was always under the dominion of women older than himself and he enjoyed it; they all mothered him. He had no more capacity to get along without mothering than a ten-year-old child has. He was as interested in his appearance as Narcissus. "He could not be in the same room with a mirror but he must invite its confidence any time he passed it; he was never so much in earnest, never so well-pleased, never so irresistible as when he wrote about himself," Henley wrote and all his biographers agree. That this is a childish trait, no one needs to be told. His speech, manner

and dress never failed to attract attention and he took great pains that they should not. Yearning for notice and efforts to secure it are equally well-known infantile traits. Many children invent fictitious parents and forebears. Stevenson was one of them. Mr. Steuart has discovered that one Margaret Lizars of French descent was his great-grandmother, and he naïvely remarks that this explains Stevenson's oddities. His imitativeness is testified to by the way he taught himself to write and this incident is discussed in the book under consideration in a chapter entitled *The Sedulous Ape.* It would be difficult to say which was the most childish of all Stevenson's *beaux gestes,* but I shall say, harmonious with heredity, the one he did not make; this incident suggests another illustrious victim of adult infantilism, Shelley. All admirers of that genius know that he went single-handed and inexperienced to Ireland to redress her wrongs. Stevenson, on hearing that a Kerry farmer had been murdered by "moonlighters" and his wife and children boycotted, proposed to rent the Curtis farm and to proceed there with his family!

His dealings with his father, his meeting and courtship of Mrs. Fanny de Grift Osbourne, his break with Henley, all conform to the teachings of child psychology and are harmonious with child-behaviour, and they are even more suggestive of infantilism than are the playing with tin-soldiers, and the setting up and operating a toy press, which was his diversion at Davos when, in his thirty-first year, he sought health there a second time.

But nothing shows his infirmity so conspicuously as his inability to look after his impaired health. It is one of the most pathetic chapters in all biography, Stevenson's imbecilic neglect of his health. No sooner was he benefited by a stay at Bournemouth, Hyères, Davos, Adirondacks, South Sea Islands, than he, with what looks like deliberation, went somewhere or did something which any one but a child would know was suicidal. The climate of Hyères suited him; in

later years he declared that it was the only time in his life that he was really happy. He was lazy, yet at the same time productive, and he felt well. But he must go home, and the reason for going was that "he was yearning to get back to her who had so often and so effectively comforted him."

Time after time he did the same thing. In fact he was on his way home from Samoa and he had reached Sydney when symptoms developed that made further flight impossible. His reason for selecting Samoa instead of Tahiti or Honolulu was supremely childish, "it was awful fun." It must be borne in mind that adult infantilism displays itself far oftener in the emotional side of the individual's make-up than in the intellectual. Geniuses, particularly in the realm of the fine arts, are often emotionally infantile. It accounts in a measure for the quarrels, tantrums and vagaries of artists, and entirely for their reputation of being neither practical nor provident.

Any one who would convince himself that many emotional and a few physical characteristics of infancy clung to Stevenson in his maturity should read the Essay *Child's Play* in the volume *Virginibus Puerisque.*

Mr. Steuart harbours the delusion that he has brought to light something new about Robert Louis Stevenson. One person familiar with everything that Stevenson wrote and practically everything that has been written about him fails to find it. To be sure he found out the name of the bonny lass with whom Stevenson fell in love while she was an earning guest of Mrs. Warren in Edinburgh, but he should be ashamed for having published it. He found out also that Stevenson did not live a strictly continent life, either before or after marriage. That is no business of Steuart, and it does not concern readers of Stevenson.

One feels on reading the chapter in which "Claire" is introduced that writing it, Mr. Steuart experienced a kind of salacious exaltation and his apology in behalf of Stevenson

makes one creep. Why Wordsworth is dragged in, no one save the author knows. He must be aware that it was not pruriency or pathological inquisitiveness that gave rise to the Wordsworth-Vallon story. Critics and interpreters had sought for explanation of obscurities in the philosopher-poet's work. The story explained them.

Mr. Steuart is satisfied that he did a Sherlock Holmes turn about the Henley-Stevenson break. Let us admit it. How do the details that he gives make Stevenson's personality clearer to us? Mrs. Stevenson did not like Henley, just as Mr. Steuart does not like Mrs. Stevenson. Henley wrote Stevenson a letter and requested that it should not be shown to anybody, a thing which would indicate that, though he was captain of his fate and master of his soul, he did not know the a. b. c. of the matrimonial game. Stevenson showed it to his wife and "der Tag" dawned for her. The battle was fought and Stevenson won, but at the expense of his peace of mind and happiness. The reparations have not been made. No one can yet tell who will finally be called the moral victor, but unless all signs and portents are to be distrusted it is R. L. S.

Mr. Steuart's book is interspersed with homilies on education and on British valour; bromidic reflections: "As all the world knows, the Casino at Monte Carlo is the centre of life and excitement to that gay community"; platitudinous moralisations: "In such matters fathers are apt to forget they were once young themselves"; and "adversity, it has been said, is the true test of manhood"; meticulous explanations such as the varieties of solicitor in Scotland; and studied padding, as an example of which may be cited seven-eighths of what he says about George Meredith. Some people may be glad to hear what he thinks of Meredith as a novelist and as a person, but there will be fewer probably after his book on Stevenson has been read.

"It is certain," writes the author, "that Vailima, with its

ever increasing strain, did much to kill Stevenson." Not nearly so much as these two volumes, which were intended as a monument to him, have done! Had Mr. Steuart talked with every old woman in Scotland who had ever seen Stevenson, had he searched the register of every lupinaria of Stevenson's day in Edinburgh, and had he spent twice as much time as he has in reverence before a bust of Henley, he could not understand Stevenson the man or Stevenson the romancer.

Finally there is something patronising and condescending in his attitude toward Stevenson, something contemptuous toward Mrs. Stevenson and something studiously neglectful of Lady Colvin that is very irritating. The reader who can rise from Mr. Steuart's volume without feeling that the author takes himself with sibylline seriousness is fortunate, and the reader who can peruse the closing line without a smile should take a cholagogue. His salute of Stevenson makes one think of a wood-pecker taking leave of an eagle.

V

POETS

TROUBADOUR, by *Alfred Kreymborg.*
WILLIAM BLAKE IN THIS WORLD, by *Harold Bruce.*
JOHN KEATS, by *Amy Lowell.*
POE—MAN, POET AND CREATIVE THINKER, by *Sherwin Cody.*
EDGAR A. POE, A PSYCHOPATHIC STUDY, by *Dr. John W. Robertson.*
RIMBAUD, by *Egdell Rickword.*

DESPITE the number and varieties of biographies published every year, we rarely come upon one that is so interesting that it can not be put down until the last page is read, one that grips us like a novel such as *The Constant Nymph* or *Tono Bungay.* Alfred Kreymborg, a maker of verses without rhyme or capitals, some of which have great emotional range, has succeeded in writing a story of his life that rivets our attention. And he has pitched it in a key that persistently revives pleasant memories. Reading it, one feels that it is the faithful portrait of a soul in its adventures through life. Mr. Kreymborg is an uncommon individual: a modest artist. He is content that his artistry shall dawn upon us gradually, that we shall discover it as it were. He does not proclaim it in the first chapter and reiterate it in all the succeeding ones.

Neither our country nor its metropolis has been considered favourable breeding ground for artists, nor is our atmosphere congenial to the artistic temperament. It is difficult to conceive of more sterile soil or environment for the growth and display of the emotional and intellectual endowment that constitute artistry than those in which Mr. Kreymborg found

himself at his birth and during his formative years. Indeed, he can not even be said to have been fortunate in his parents, though his father, a German cigar packer, had a sense of humour, liked Jews, and detested Tammany Hall; and his mother played the Butterbrod Walzer and was optimistic. But that his talent was nevertheless "in the family" on his mother's side is testified by his Aunt Isabelle, who went to the library every day, and was devoted to things called ideals.

The author does not dwell upon the locus and environment of his early days; he spares us the minutiæ of his drab and sordid surroundings, but we get a picture of them that is more informative than if it were painted in vivid colours. Years ago I saw it every day, that German-American home in the middle East Side, I ministered unto those who constituted it, and I gained an esteem and an affection for its members that required a world-calamity to alter. Now that it is presented to me anew through verbal medium my recollections are refreshed, my affections renewed and I praise the dexterity of the artist's pen and the accuracy of his memory.

The picture he gives of New York is the thing that will give the book whatever permanency it will have. When Mouquin's and the Hotel Algonquin shall be replaced with a Rotonde and a Café Michaud; when there will be a Boulevard Saint-Michel instead of a Greenwich Village; a rue la Boëtie instead of a 57th Street; when pagan practice shall have succeeded puritanic principle—then hedonists and students of manners and customs who would know what New York was like while big with the twentieth century, may turn to *Troubadour* for enlightenment. When poets, now considered radicals or rhythmicals, shall have taken on conventionality, or professorships, and would tell their fellows or their students of the birth and early days of their art and show them the incubators in which the punies were put for development, they will take them for a walk in 14th Street and they will read to them from *Troubadour*. The latter will be more agreeable than

the former for Kreymborg's prose has much of the elusive loveliness of his poetry; for like his friend Sherwood Anderson, he knows how to string words together so that they make music for the reader; and Fourteenth Street is down at the heels, frayed at the cuffs and woozy in the head.

The author bears unnecessarily hard on the *forte* pedal when he renders his hardship selections. It does not add anything to our picture of New York's Bohemia to be told about the "awful stench one could never quite grow accustomed to" in Kiel's Bakery, and one reader at least has not been able to guess the riddle of the Fourteenth Street studio. The occupant had been working at Æolian Hall and had progressed to orchestrelle leader, apparently content with his prospects. Then Eve came in ostensibly to buy some rolls for her pianola. They called her Tommy. She was twenty-seven or eight and "scarcely what worldly folks would have designated a sophisticated person but with one or two indisputable claims in the direction of Plymouth and the Mayflower." "Krimmie" learned about women from her. I suspect it was to facilitate deeper knowledge rather than to gestate his art that he resigned his sinecure for the sake of a thing so quixotic as a studio, "not even a studio, but a room, less than a room—up the stairs of a dismal rickety building on West 14th Street."

Be that as it may, it was from that day that he began to get that intimate knowledge of the habits of the wolf called want, which his autobiography shows us that he possesses, and of the world frequented by the wolf's readiest prey. He reduced the beast to fictitious pacification by throwing him his winnings at chess and as he had become an expert player they were often considerable, and his germinating worldly love he embodied in a story called *Erna Vitek,* which brought him a mild *succès de scandale.* As strange a trio as could be assembled in New York at the time—George Francis Train having left Madison Square for the beyond—came forward to defend him. They were Frank Harris, Rev. Percy Grant and

Dr. Frank Crane. Mr. Kreymborg observes parenthetically that he has not met the author of *My Life and Loves* to this day. It is gratifying to know that amidst all the blows that he received in his quarter century of struggle, there was occasionally a caress!

Krimmie did not exactly tire of Tommy, nor did Tommy exactly tire of Krimmie. But the latter went West and the former East and the experience gave the lie to the poet who sang about the effect of absence on the heart. In East Lyme or thereabouts, Christine threw a dazzling light across Krimmie's path. It flabbergasted him for a moment so that he could not distinguish her from others, but as soon as his eyes became adjusted to the illumination he knew the die was cast, the seal was set. He hastily sought a scrap of paper and embodied his emotion in six words, each a monosyllable:

Till you came,
I was I.

Thus did he disregard his oft-repeated admonition that simplicity should occur at the end of a long line of tradition. It reminds me of a picture by B. Cory Kilvert that *Life* published many years ago: a small boy gazing intently at a child's garment (the name of which it is improper to mention in polite American society) hanging on the line of a tenement backyard and uttering ecstatically: "Hers."

And so they were married. Krimmie did not distinguish then between infatuation and love, and Christine had no idea how rough the road would be from romance to reality, especially the part through Grantwood, N. J. So after a year of many detours they decided to try it alone—for a time at least. A young man whose adolescence was pitted with piety had returned from Rome whither he had gone to have love's scars removed. He was keen to take Christine into his *matrio-monale* Ford in which he had invited her to ride before the

priesthood beckoned to him. Day by day, in every way, Krimmie's affectivity resembled more and more that of the late Mr. Barkis. It is not clearly apparent why Mr. Kreymborg gave up Christine with such readiness. I suspect she had an infantile personality, much like Dora who stole little Emily's lover away. Adult infantilism and matrimony make an unpalatable emulsion.

One of the many fragments of knowledge that years bring is that man consoles himself readily, often quickly. Krimmie got a job in a Wall Street office as literary secretary to a Hungarian fourflusher, "high in the counsels of the Democratic Party," to compose superfine notes, commensurable with the calling of the Boss. He had not been there long when he met Dorothy. If *Troubadour* did not give us anything besides the picture of a person who looked like one of Goya's ladies, and who had the gentleness of Ruth with the constancy of Penelope, it would still be a precious document. When I think of the many perfect wives of artists that I have known: Mark Twain's Livy, James Joyce's Lady; Paderewski's alter ego, I shall always have a fancy that I have known Dorothy in the quick. One of the first things she did for him after orienting him on life's pathway was to save for the world his "most quasi-popular composition," *Lima Beans*. Then she married him and his days began to lengthen as his heart began to strengthen. They went West, he to intone his poems, and climb Parnassus on the lake; she to pull the strings of his marionettes and to encourage him when his feet slipped on the mountain.

Krimmie's rejuvenation was more complete than anything Steinach has accomplished. He wrote plays, walked securely amongst the Provincetown Thespians, fraternised intimately with literary *arrivistes* and puppet-people, encouraged youngsters who were yearning for self-expression and struggling against starvation, earned the good will of the *Dial,* "now the leading æsthetic periodical of the soil," and gained the confi-

dence of the young man who was to facilitate him in a long dreamed-of gesture: the founding of an international Magazine of the Arts which would stress the efforts of young Americans. So Krimmie and Dorothy went to Italy and brought forth *Broom*. Incidentally, they met Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Jean Cocteau, Tristan Tzara, the daddy of *Dada,* Gertrude Stein, the mammie of gibberish, and Gordon Craig, the master of marionettes, and others too numerous to mention. Krimmie liked them and they all liked Krimmie, or if they did not, one would never suspect it from Mr. Kreymborg's book; I fancy they did for obviously he has a genius for friendship. If they did not like Dorothy, good taste has deserted the *habitués* of the Quarter.

Among the many engaging episodes of their European trip none is more delightful than the description of their encounter with the world's most famous poetic clown, Signor F. P. Marinetti, unless it be the meeting with the pompous Pound. Marinetti directing his fellow-players, totally oblivious of the vegetables that were hurled at him, insensitive of their obvious decay, deaf to the insults and imprecations that came from every quarter of the theatre, was a man risking his life for a reputation. Mr. Kreymborg knew the habits of the wolf, but he knew little of bears or their garden and he had never visited the Parliament of Italy when the House was in session. Later, when he was informed that the civil warfare which he had witnessed had been arranged by Marinetti in the subtle behalf of publicity—that he always hired a number of desperados to open the attack on the stage, and to arouse the audience to an emulation of activity, he realised that he had had a lesson in finesse. Such lessons are given nowhere in the world better than in Italy.

Krimmie came home a better man. No change was to be discerned in Dorothy on her return. She was the same as when she went: a bit of perfection. Then he published his latest book of poems *Less Lonely,* which caused some of his

friends to fear that it indicated the consecration of approaching middle age. The verses observe too many maxims too carefully; they are too regularly iambic; their plethora of monosyllables cause them to lose the nuance of accent, etc. Others thought they showed the effect of Italian atmosphere so favourable to every form of classicism. He "made up" with Louis Untermeyer; and wrote the story of his own life. For one of these accomplishments, we can never cease to be grateful. It has contributed to our pleasure, our instruction and our welfare. Any one who will read *Troubadour* will love his fellow man more easily, and more intensely.

Troubadour is an album filled with pictures big and little of people we have known or would like to have known. Some of them are vignettes. Some are life-size portraits, all of them testify to the facile and the tender heart. There are few who have figured in the artistic life of this country in the past twenty years who do not come in for mention or characterisation. They all had to do in some way with the genesis, birth and development of his urge for expression,—an urge which is upon him imperiously and which no one, so far as may be judged from the text, has tried to impede. Indeed one of the striking features of the book is that it reveals no skunner against puritanism, no grouch against democracy, no belief in the existence of a cabal to strangle artistry, no ideas of persecution on the part of the author. The world has treated him fairly enough. If ever there was a writer who had no preparation for writing it was Alfred Kreymborg. What he learned he taught himself. If he had learned the piano or the violin without instruction or direction he would have had no fewer long days or lean nights than he has had.

It is a pity that Alfred Kreymborg could not have gone to Columbia University instead of Æolian Hall. Had he been judiciously advised and properly guided he might have been thrown into currents that would have carried him more quickly to success, as he would have developed his artistic

consciousness more smoothly and harmoniously and would the more easily have been able to guess the poet's secret: to be happy in his heightened power to see and feel.

The era of self-made men is passing; many regret it and amongst them are those who get pleasure from struggle, and happiness from contemplating it. As Mr. Kreymborg says, recalling the days when he first went to Fourteenth Street to the "studio:" "And there was absolutely no joy like it—nothing like it." Writers and artists have no "corner" on that joy.

§

Writing in 1833, six years after William Blake, the poet-artist, had gone to immortality, Edward FitzGerald said, "To me there is a particular interest in this man's writing and drawing, in the strangeness of the constitution of his mind." That is the interest of William Blake to-day when his poetry fails to thrill or to inspire, and when his highest claim to be considered an artist rests on a series of drawings and engravings called *Illustrations to the Book of Job.*

William Blake had visual hallucinations. At least, he had the capacity to see the creations of his imagination with the same vividness as if they had been before his eyes, and he maintained that they were before his eyes. He contended that things whose reality cannot be proved, such as angels, people deceased for ages, and buildings demolished for centuries, presented themselves in his visual field. He maintained it with sincerity and determination and he drew what he said he saw. But the fact that a man has hallucinations is not sufficient to label him "insane." Conduct that is prejudicial to others' happiness, welfare, and comfort is an essential condition, and none of William Blake's biographers or commentators has described such conduct. To many psychiatrists like myself, Mr. Bruce's effort to show that William Blake was sane will undoubtedly seem an unnecessary labor, but a

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gratifying one, for sympathetic hero handling is a kindly thing to observe.

We never cease to marvel that persons who are "mad" can create or copy so masterfully that the admiration of contemporaries is compelled and the gratitude of posterity earned. This, despite the long list of accomplishments in the world of art and letters by men who have been potentially or actually mad.

Mr. Bruce opens one of his chapters with the sentence: "Blake, in other words, was neurotic." Now, the word "neurotic" must have some very specific meaning for our young author, otherwise he would not declare himself in this dramatic way. If William Blake was neurotic, there is no indication of it in Mr. Bruce's book. William Blake was psychotic. He had what is called for purposes of facile designation a manic-depressive temperament. The manic-depressive temperament can be described with the same specificity as pneumonia; practically the only thing about it that we do not know is its cause, but it is only very recently that we have known the cause of pneumonia. I do not consider that this is the proper place for the disquisition on the individual psychic functions, particularly on the one known as affectivity, which would be necessary were I to make a readily comprehensible description of the manic-depressive psychosis, whether it reveals itself in shadowy outlines or majestic proportions. Mr. Bruce writes, "To say confidently that Blake suffered from mythomania, or from automatism, or from occasional hyperæsthesia, or from manic-depressive tendencies, or that he did not tend toward a definite schizophrenia is to add polysyllables rather than illumination to the discussion of his state." This is an attitude of preciosity on the part of Mr. Bruce that is very offensive to me. If he does not know what "schizophrenia" means, then he should consult a dictionary and not display his infirmities to the world. If he knows a better word, that is a more comprehensive or a more descriptive word

for personality cleavage, I suggest that he submit it. What further illumination concerning the mental processes of an individual can be desired than is conveyed in the statement that he is a manic-depressive personality, or that he displayed the manifestations of the mental disorder known as the manic-depressive psychosis?

A few years ago, in a book entitled *Idling in Italy,* I said anent Giovanni Papini (who in 1920 was quite unknown to the American public) that no one unfamiliar with the disorder of the mind called manic-depressive psychosis could fully understand him.

There is no one more sane and businesslike than the former Futurist, yet the reactions of his supersensitive nature have great similarity with this mental disorder, present, in embryo, in many people. In every display of the manic-depressive temperament, there is a period of emotional, physical and intellectual activity that surmounts every obstacle, brushes aside every barrier, leaps over every hurdle. During its dominancy, the victim respects neither law nor convention; the goal is his only object. He does not always know where he is going and he is not concerned with it; he is concerned only with going. When the spectator sees the road over which he has travelled on his winged horse he finds it littered with the débris that Pegasus has trampled upon and crushed.

This period of hyperactivity is invariably followed by a time of depression, of inadequacy, of emotional barrenness, of intellectual sterility, of physical impotency, of spiritual frigidity. The sun from which the body and the soul have had their warmth and their glow falls below the horizon of the unfortunate's existence and he senses the terrors of the dark and the rigidity of beginning congelation. Then, when hope and warmth have all but gone and only life, mere life without colour or emotion remains, and the necessity of living forever in a world perpetually enshrouded in darkness with no differentiation in the débris remaining after the tornado, then the sun gradually peeps up, illuminates, warms, revives, fructifies the earth, and the sufferer becomes normal—normal save in the moments or hours of fear when he contemplates having again to brave the hurricane or to breast the deluge. But once

the wind begins to blow with a velocity that bespeaks the readvent of the tornado, he throws off inhibition and goes out in the open, holds up the torch that shall light the whole world, and with his megaphone from the top of Helicon shouts: "This way to the revolution."

I contend that any one who will read even the summaries of the chapters of Mr. Bruce's book will need no further evidence to be convinced that William Blake, who had "everywhere the poet's firm persuasion that things were so, who stuck to a choice that was contemned, to a taste that was laughed at"; who was as immune to ridicule as a tortoise is to admonition; who spoke his mind on all occasions even when it clashed with authority; who, like the master potter, knew, knew, knew; who swung backward and forward from high exaltation to pits of melancholy; who listened to messengers from heaven daily and nightly and composed under their dictation a poem which he considered the grandest that this world contained, even though he was never able to find one purchaser; who received Richard Cœur-de-Lion at a quarter past twelve, midnight, and painted his portrait though he had been dead several centuries; who displayed a persecutory state of mind when he was depressed, and a self-sufficiency that brooked no curbing when he was exalted; who took no thought for the morrow and was as unable to take care of himself as a two-year-old child, was of manic-depressive temperament. That he escaped being sent to Bethlehem Hospital, vulgarly called Bedlam, entitles him to our belated congratulations.

When Mr. Bruce ceases to be annoying about adjectives, he is both amusing and amazing. "William Blake had the neurotic's need for dependence on some one outside himself." A neurotic is an individual who has some nervous disorder or disease, functional or organic. A typical nervous disorder is migraine, sick headache. I could easily enumerate a score of the world's great men and women who were thus afflicted. What was their need for dependence on some one outside them-

selves? "He had the neurotic's sense of time." What can that possibly be? Was it the sense of time that Dostoievsky had just before the convulsions appeared that attended his epileptic attacks? Dostoievsky was a neurotic—one of the most typical that ever lived, perhaps. He maintained that the few seconds previous to the motor manifestation of an attack were a timeless eternity. If it lasted another fractional part of a second, he could not possibly survive it. Did William Blake have this kind of sense of time?

He could not tolerate a pedantic, pretentious, stupid, pachydermatous patron, William Hayley. According to Sinclair Lewis there are only two races of people, the neurotic and the stupid: William Hayley was stupid, William Blake was neurotic. At least, it can be said of this reasoning that it offers a better foundation for Mr. Bruce's thesis than that which he has heretofore provided.

William Blake was a happy man, for he believed in himself. He was a lucky man—his wife believed in him. He was a courageous man: he threw a trespassing sailor, emboldened by strong drink, out of his garden and was tried for high treason. Yet he patiently tolerated the inquisitive visits of the greatest bore of his time, Crabb Robinson, without even threat of assault. He did not get his just deserts from his contemporaries, but posterity has more than made up for their niggardliness, and Mr. Bruce has given posterity a leg up. Had he dwelt more on the value and significance of Blake's art and less on his "neurosis" he would have served us better. But his book is a snappy, concise, readable account of a man who had faith in himself and who, finally, compelled others to acknowledge his merit.

§

Students of Keats' poetry and personality are not likely to admit that a new life of him was called for, in view of Sir Sid-

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JOHN KEATS IN HIS LAST ILLNESS

From the sketch by Joseph Severn, January 28, 1821, which Charles Cowden Clarke characterised as "a marvellously correct likeness."

ney Colvin's searching and critical study which has just appeared in a third edition. Amy Lowell's reason for putting forth a new biography was that she had new material; but what I say elsewhere about Barton's *Lincoln* applies here: the new material justified a brochure, not a life.

Miss Lowell wanted to write a life of Keats; that, aside from anything else, was reason enough for her. She had a vicarious mother-feeling for him and she was determined to display it. Her last book is an enduring monument to her industry, patience and perspicacity. She had a relish for criticism, but at times she confounded it with abuse and when she championed an individual, a cause, or a movement, she did it in the manner of a fellow-townsman, John L. Sullivan: with all her might and main. She "never trembled like a guilty thing surprised," or if she did it was only when she was enraged by the stupidities and ignorance of others—those who did not agree with her.

Keats is a fascinating figure and always will be. The son of a stableman, the doors of the best literary society in London were opened wide to him; though he had but few years of mortal life, and few months of literary activity, he has become one of the greatest English poets. It was not the pathos of his existence, the diseases that ravaged him, the hopelessness of his love, or the relative isolation in which he was morally steeped that focusses our interest. It is his conception of poetry, his flight into the world of dreams untinged by reality, and the wondrous rapidity with which he scaled the heights of imagery. They made him immortal. In "the Armour of Words and with the Sword of Syllables" he fought a great battle and won. His personality had many facets and they were nearly all made to arrest attention, enlist sympathy and inspire admiration; but poet though he was, he was a man, and his human side is as deserving of study as his poetical nature; in the latter, there is primarily genius, and genius is

not to be explained or understood, still less studied. In the former, there is the weakness of a mere mortal and the strength of an intelligence; the misery of bad health, and the victory of will-power; the alleged resignation to death and the desire to live; the heart break of the man whose ambitions were never fulfilled, and the exaltations of the lover who believes his love to be reciprocated; the grimace of the lip which finds gall in the cup from which it drinks, and the satisfaction of the heart which has faith in the world and confidence in friendship. All these aspects of the poet Amy Lowell has followed day by day, almost hour by hour, with the persistency of a detective. From the slightest cue, she lays a course which soon leads her to the exact day and the approximate hour when Keats accomplished the action she describes, and with the support of a clear conscience and the encouragement of proofs, to her irrefutable, she opposes the judgment of other biographers, and fearlessly and categorically contradicts them. This scarcely justifies her assertion "We may say, with something like certainty, that we know everything he did; for which reason, it is safe to assume that what we do not know of, he did not do." I have encountered many foolish statements in literature; the one quoted is not the least of them. It would be far truer to say that we know every thought he had, and how foolish that would be! His letters reveal his sensations, his emotions and his thoughts, but they are singularly silent about what he did.

It would take a thorough knowledge of all the documents Miss Lowell brings to light, and require a deep study of all that has ever been written about Keats either to refute or to accept all her conclusions. Many of them will seem to the average reader an aggregation of useless details rather than an approach to the subject from a new angle, having a bearing on Keats the poet, or Keats the man. The task of discussing the foundation of her conclusions must be left to other biographers or students of the poet, of whom there are legions;

and it can not be attempted at all until after the publication of all the notes of the poet's friend, Brown.

John Keats' brief life was singularly full, and the best of his record is to be found in the letters he wrote to friends, and to his brothers and sisters. Written from the fulness of the heart and with no other object than to relieve his mind and convey news, these constitute the most complete and comprehensive characterisation of the poet. Keats was modest about his genius, but he had an insatiable appetite for praise and love. And every one who knew him loved him and believed in him. It was the public that failed him. And sensitive as he was, its disdain, and the scorn of Lockhart and other critics, caused him profound suffering. To say that it killed him, as has been said countless times the past three generations, is to utter an absurdity. He had two most serious infectious diseases, and he had the kind of temperament that facilitates the progress of both of them.

Amy Lowell thinks that had he lived, he would probably not have been as great a poet as Browning. There seems small foundation for such a statement, and in this prophetless age, such pronouncements are worthless. What Keats produced in three years of poetic work, and less than one year of real inspiration, suggests at least that he would have been all the greater had he lived. He might not have developed emotionally, nor intellectually, but there is very little question that he would have developed critically and that his sense of values would have taken on keenness and profundity. Even as he was, his creative faculty was considerable. He could turn an inspirational current on at will. When it stopped flowing, or when it began to flow feebly, he could turn it off; then, while the Olympic dynamo was generating, and the Parnassian battery storing the divine fluid, he could turn on the light of criticism. Not all great poets can do that.

Early in life Keats lost his mother, who, by her attachment, represented for him the ideal of motherly love. For such

love, he unceasingly sought. He had what the Freudians call a mother-complex. He needed the constant watchfulness, the untiring devotion and the profound understanding that a mother alone can bestow on a man. In Fanny Brawne, he found youth and beauty, brains and brilliancy, but none of the fondness and constancy that his nature demanded.

It was Miss Lowell's unquenchable thirst for justice and honesty that made her attempt such thorough rehabilitation of Fanny Brawne. The effort seems useless and rather irrelevant, without much justification or foundation. Fanny Brawne's love for Keats was such that, had he not been under the stupefying influence of the little Greek god who blindfolds his victims, he would have seen that Fanny was of similar calibre to the other women whose lack of motherly feeling for him prevented them from taking a permanent place in his heart. Miss Lowell realised the limitations of Fanny when she wrote: "One of the many reasons for Keats' failure in his relations with Fanny Brawne was that he sought in her a mother as well as a lover, and she had not yet grown up enough to stand to him in both capacities." This is the judgment of a mind, not of a heart; the judgment of a critic, not of a psychologist; the judgment of one who believes that years bring in their trend qualities and characteristics that do not exist in the embryo of maturity. A woman need not be of mother-age to be maternal any more than a pianist need be able to play Russian music at first sight to be an artist. The maternal instinct, when it exists, is revealed in childhood, and a love like that which united John Keats to Fanny Brawne, should have been the spark which caused her love to blaze. The letters of Fanny which have been published do not help to build a shrine around her and to rehabilitate her, since they were practically all written after Keats' death—when memories and remorse might have vied to make her appreciate what she had lost. Moreover Fanny, who pretended to love him, did little to prove it; and none of Miss Lowell's arguments

can convince one reader that, had she really been seized of the same passion that possessed Keats, she would not have married him, when marriage meant happiness and bliss for him. Of course, Keats was ill, very ill, but no one knew it to be a fatal illness, and it may be safe to assume that either of Shelley's wives would have surmounted the obstacle. Miss Lowell says: "Fanny lived in an age when well-brought-up daughters in her class of life did not jump over the traces and marry offhand; and suppose Fanny had happened to do this, neither she nor Keats had the money to run away, and was it to be contemplated that Fanny should move next door and let Brown support the pair of them! The idea is absurd. Fanny was not Harriet Westbrook, and Keats was no Shelley. They each did the best they could, as I think any one not hoodwinked by an unreasoning love for Keats can see."

It was lucky for Keats that Fanny was no Harriet Westbrook, but what a pity she had not some of the virtues and qualities that made Mary Godwin the exquisite creature and inspirer that she was! Furthermore, there is no indication in Miss Lowell's book that the question of marriage had ever been brought up for family consideration. It seems just to say that Fanny, with her limitations and light-heartedness, did the best she could, and was no heroine; but what we would have liked to see would have been a Fanny "hoodwinked by an unreasoning love of Keats," who combined pulchritude and intelligence with a magnificent heart.

The picture that Miss Lowell paints of Keats is idealised. He is not vulgar as Watson said, not a howler and a sniveller as Swinburne said, and not "unmanly" as many said and thought after reading the Brawne letters. We are ready to believe he was none of them, but it is too much to ask that we shall believe "that the pure poet is a pure poet because he is a pure man." White-washing poets is the meanest occupation in the world next to census-taking.

However, she has interwoven and blended the man with

the artist in such manner that the one overlaps the other constantly, and the result is a homogeneous and substantial whole. When the man dominates, Keats is delightful; when the artist has the upper hand, he is admirable. She has rendered exquisitely the humanity of the poet who had belief in nothing but what he learned for himself, and who could be himself always. What she failed to convey was his profound self-consciousness and sensuousness, and how they influenced, one might almost say shaped, his life and his poetry.

Keats underwent a religious experience, conversion one may call it, that influenced his life and his work; so that one may cite him as evidence that poetic comprehension can not be complete unless it includes religious comprehension. It is to be regretted that Miss Lowell did not discuss this episode.

However, she made the most of her documentation, and of her subject from an intellectual and objective point of view. She has written a biography which is as powerfully conceived as it is intelligently realised, and it can never be repeated too often that, above all, Amy Lowell was an intelligence. Her capacity for work was astounding; her painstaking and thorough study an achievement of labour that reminds one of the monks of the Middle Ages who spent their lives in cells and cubicles, illuminating prayer books with the most exquisite figures and colours, bringing to their task the patience of angels, the piety of saints and the skill of artists. But her industry was as naught compared with the tenacity of her opinion and the legitimacy of her judgment.

From a subjective and emotional point of view, *John Keats* is far from perfect; for the biographer has not made sufficient allowance for the fact that she was writing of a genius. She took his measurements with the same tape she would use if she were measuring William J. Bryan, and she would probably have approved of James Barrie's *Tammas Haggart* and his ideas in regard to "geniuses." She did not allow for the spread of Keats' wings, or the aureole of his

genius. She explained his motives and his achievements with everyday words, and she brought to bear on her task the illumination of medicine and the testimony of psychology. She achieved a work of the head, not of the heart, and John Keats was above all a heart. In several instances she is at a loss to understand her subject, especially toward the end of his life, which takes in centuries of achievements in a few months of actual life. Keats moves too fast for her; his feet are too winged, the empyrean too rarefied.

She can not understand how life could have been "painful" for him since he had almost everything he needed, and had not received more than his share of misfortunes; and unless one attempts to read in the heart of Keats, nothing in his external life can corroborate the statement that his life was a tragedy. Human and material blessings are not enough to make life bearable, and Keats had not an excessive amount of either. It may be a comfort to think that nothing on earth would have made him really happy—save perhaps to possess Fanny as wife, but it is safe to assume that, unless such a marriage accomplished the miracle, Fanny bound to Keats would have failed him. Better for him in this instance to live in hope than to realise it.

Few things are more convincing of Miss Lowell's inability really to appreciate the heart of her subject than the comment on one of Keats' letters to Fanny in which she says that few persons could endure much longer the agonies and uncertainties which she was "so peculiarly made to create." Miss Lowell follows this quotation with "Nobody with a grain of medical sense can fail to see this is delirium." Perhaps not, but to use medical sense to judge John Keats is a mistake. It was agony of a sort that no medicine could relieve, and which no amount of sense could subdue.

Miss Lowell said that "Endymion suddenly finding his empty uplifted arms clasped about a naked waist is a beautiful flight of imagination astringently absorbingly expressed."

Her *John Keats* is astringently absorbing, but its expressions are sometimes corrosive.

§

We may not know all Poe's virtues and infirmities; time may be dealing too harshly or too leniently with him; it is possible that short-story writers do not acknowledge their indebtedness to him, and that students of style do not study him sufficiently; and it may be that some do not admit that he is one of a very small group constituting the world's great writers. But none of these injustices of mind or heart will be remedied by Mr. Sherwin Cody's book. The author may possess qualifications for writing a life of Poe, but his book does not testify them. The art of narrative has eluded him; style, which must give flavour and substance to all biography, seems to be beyond his reach, and he has no critical judgment in the use of the vast material that Professor Harrison and many other students of Poe have collected. The only qualification he would seem to have is "a confessed sympathy with Poe's difficult personal character." Even though this sympathy embraced Poe's impersonal character, it would not suffice him as biographer.

It would be easy to characterize Mr. Cody's book, but I shall refrain and call attention only to his intemperance of statement and his disregard of the rules governing grammatical construction. "Poe stood absolutely alone among American writers." "It is probable that Poe has been the most venomously hated man of letters in the whole range of history. W. C. Brownell in his cold, impersonal way discusses Poe with a hatred as intense as Griswold's."

"Poe died of nervous breakdown rather than of the effects of over-indulgence in intoxicants."

"Poe wrote but few poems the next fifteen years, but every one is a masterpiece." There are scores of statements of similar texture, but none of them is true.

As an example of Mr. Cody's lack of critical judgment and understanding, the following is offered: "The writer has in mind two young friends who, in recent times, struggling to attain literary recognition as Poe did, though with far less accomplishment than his, sank under the mental strain and died, one of paresis, one of apoplexy, and a careful study of literary history would reveal scores of such." Paresis has one cause, and only one; apoplexy in early life has two, and one of them is the same spirochete that causes paresis.

There is a finality about the author's statements that is at first irritating, then depressing. "No very excitable person, such as Poe was, could possibly give us calm and placid judgment that would harmonise with the crude impressions of common men and women." Anatole France was a very excitable person, and he gave very calm and placid judgments, and it is up to "common women" to say whether such judgments harmonise with their "crude impressions" or not. Not all of Mr. Cody's book is irritating. Some of it is amusing. Commenting on some of Poe's well known lies (his personal mendacity he calls it) he says, "Possibly he regarded this romancing about himself as harmless in itself and of some value as advertising, but the thoughtful critic can not refrain from severely blaming him." Here speaks the author of *Business Correspondence and Advertisement Writing for Business Men* and the critic who is not only thoughtful but moral!

The publishers say that Mr. Cody received a letter from Bliss Perry which contains the sentence, "You have done a real service to literature." It is more difficult to believe, even, than many of the statements of his book.

Doctor Robertson says his study of Poe "contains something new which attempts to harmonise and to present in new aspects old and well established facts, and which further makes plain the neurosis from which he suffered." The facts about Poe were stated temperately and judiciously forty years ago by a man whose labours have ornamented American letters, and

few facts have been added since the time George E. Woodberry wrote:

"Poe, highly endowed, well-bred, and educated better than his fellows, had more than once fair opportunities, brilliant prospects, and groups of benevolent, considerate, and active friends, and repeatedly forfeited prosperity and even the homely honour of an honest name. He ate opium and drank liquor; whatever was the cause, these were the instruments of his ruin. He died under circumstances of exceptional ugliness, misery and pity. He left a fame destined to long memory. On the roll of our literature Poe's name is inscribed with the few foremost, and in the world at large his genius is established as valid among all men."

To call his infirmity "dipsomania" and his genius a "neurosis" does not more securely enhance Poe in the hearts of his countrymen, or add to the lustre of his name.

The thesis of the psychopathic study is that Poe was the victim of a hereditary "neurosis," which, the author claims, differs essentially from alcoholism; and that this neurosis rendered him at intervals non-responsible for his acts, at the same time giving him a personality as unlike his own in his normal condition as certain familiar forms of insanity are universally admitted to do. Entirely apart from the correctness of the author's claims, they throw no additional light on the events of Poe's life, nor do they add interest to his writings, either from the standpoint of literature or of psychopathology. It may be comforting to some of Poe's admirers to think of him as a psychopath instead of a drunkard; an irresponsible victim of an inherited handicap, instead of a moral weakling who, under the influence of alcohol, sometimes committed dishonourable acts.

Dr. Robertson says: "Only those who are experienced in the study of patients thus afflicted, and who have had personal association with them, can fully understand and appreciate the nature of the neurosis from which Poe suffered and the

difficulty in overcoming such obsessions." A neurosis is a nervous disease not associated with or dependent upon alteration of the nerves demonstrable during life or after death. Dr. Robertson believes that Poe had such disease, that it was inherited, and that it was beyond his will or determination materially to influence or control it. What neurosis did he have? Was it periodic "spreeing," called dipsomania? If so, one might legitimately, perhaps, call it a psychosis, if he is bound to give it a name. But "neurosis" seems to be wholly beyond justification. Just what he means by "the difficulty in overcoming such obsessions" is not evident, or to me conjecturable. Psychologists and psychiatrists use the term obsession to indicate a state of siege or torment which seeks to control the individual and to condition his conduct. I have never heard the word obsession used synonymously with impulsion to drink or compulsion to yield to the desire to drink.

"Dipsomania necessarily is an alcoholic inheritance." It is to be presumed that Dr. Robertson means to say that individuals who have an uncontrollable desire to drink periodically are descended from stock who had similar desires and succumbed to them. But that does not advance us any further in our conception of what this so-called dipsomania is. The unwarrantable liberty the author of this book takes is that he speaks of dipsomania as if it were a definite disease which psychiatrists recognise and describe. Dr. Robertson is a bibliomaniac. I have Ruskin's authority for saying if a man spends lavishly on his library, you call him mad, a bibliomaniac. If some of Dr. Robertson's ancestry bought books when their more material neighbors thought they should have bought shoes, his neurosis might be called a bibliophilic inheritance. This characterisation would not particularly advance our knowledge of Dr. Robertson's personality or aid us to interpret his conduct.

Alcohol plays an important rôle in the causation of mental diseases. Statistics seem to show that about 12 per cent. of

the certified insane in this country were addicted to the intemperate use of alcohol. But it does not follow that their insanity was due to such addiction. It is but one of the many causes of insanity, and not the most important. "Dipsomania is a disease, and those suffering from it should be given such medical consideration as we give the insane." This is purely a gratuitous assumption on the part of the author. Certainly dipsomania is Dis-Ease if you emphasise the etymology of the word (a thing which Dr. Robertson enjoys doing, as he is at some pains to point out to us that genius is derived from *genere,* to beget): but if the purpose is to convey that dipsomania is a mental disease, such as one of the manic-depressive psychoses, paranoia, or other recognisable and described mental diseases without anatomical foundation, it is both unjustified and misleading. Dr. Robertson quotes Spitzka, "one of our well-known authorities on insanity," in support of some of his statements. The lay reader might legitimately infer that Spitzka was an authority of the present day, whereas in reality the science of psychiatry has been revolutionised since he wrote. The modern text-book of psychiatry has no chapter on dipsomania, nor does it recognise it as a distinct variety of insanity. Modern psychiatry recognises many forms of alcoholic insanity and it calls them alcoholic dementia, alcoholic pseudo-paresis, alcoholic pseudo-paranoia, alcoholic hallucinosis, etc. Dipsomania is used by the modern psychiatrist to indicate a periodical impulse to drink. So far as the writer knows, no one has ever denied that Edgar A. Poe had dipsomania. Why belabour this admission when he has been comfortably seated on Parnassus for half a century?

Again it might be asked, what medical consideration do we give the insane that dipsomaniacs should have? We deprive them of their liberty for their own benefit and for the benefit of the community, but that is a judicial consideration. We do not deprive dipsomaniacs of their liberty because we are

not permitted to do so, though it is self-evident that it would be to their advantage and to the benefit of those dependent upon and associated with them. Dr. Robertson seems to think that it is not generally accepted that an uncontrollable inclination to drink is inherited, and that he must prove it. In order to prove it he feels that he must first prove that genius is inherited. The teachings of biology are against him.

As a rule biographers deem that they have completed their work of establishing hereditary predispositions on which later accomplishments depend, when they have constructed a genealogy blazed with quarterings, and all the more ornamental if marked with the bend sinister. They know nothing of the Mendelian laws of heredity.

How Dr. Robertson can possibly know that biographers know nothing of the Mendelian laws of heredity is beyond any surmise on my part. I should say that if a biographer like Woodberry should indicate in his writing or allow it to be inferred that the Mendelian hypothesis was known to him, it would be safe to lay a handsome wager on it. But when Griswold, Poe's first biographer, wrote his appreciation, or as Dr. Robertson would prefer to call it, his calumny, Gregor Mendel, the Austrian priest and Abbot of the Augustine Convent of Brünn, was quietly working in his garden making those observations that permitted him to formulate a law which has revolutionised our view of the principles of fertilisation in plants, and which may eventually revolutionise our ideas of heredity in higher organisms. He published a paper about them in the Natural History Society of Brünn, but it was lost sight of for many years and not until the principles of it were rediscovered in 1899 by De Vries, by Corens and by Tschermak was the epoch-making work of Mendel recognised. Although Dr. Robertson does not say it in so many words, he leaves the reader to infer that the Mendelian hypothesis is accepted and that it is the foundation of our theories

and facts of heredity. In reality, however, the theories of heredity that must still be reckoned with are those of Darwin, Cope and Weismann, respectively, or the theories of pangenesis, perigenesis and the theory of the continuity of the germ plasm.

Biographers [says the author] ignore the fact that great genius like that of Cæsar or Napoleon, or such mental gifts as were bestowed upon Milton and Shakespeare, are the results of what horticulturists call a sport and occur only as an abnormality.

Biographers may ignore the alleged fact, but in doing so, they are in the company of such biologists as Francis Galton and his pupil and successor, Karl Pearson, to whom we owe much of our knowledge of heredity, acceptable and accepted.

Dr. Robertson has a way of making an arbitrary statement which savours of arrogance. For instance, "Genius develops early and is characterised by precocity." I suppose Pasteur was a genius. He was the founder of the science of bacteriology, the architect of a diseaseless world. There is every reason for believing that he was not precocious. Few people would deny that Thomas Edison is a genius. He certainly was not precocious. Though the names of youthful dullards in the roll of men of achievement are not legion, I recall those of Davy, Linnæus, Humboldt, Watt, Fulton, Schiller, Heine, Goldsmith, Beecher, Whistler, Patrick Henry and Rousseau.

"Precocity of necessity foretells early decline," says the author. John Stuart Mill, for instance, who could read Plato and Demosthenes with ease when he was eight and began a thorough study of scholastic logic when he was twelve! J. St. Loe Strachey is still going strong, and any one who doubts that he was precocious is referred to *The Joy of Living*. "I view brilliancy in the child as an abnormal heredity that must pay the price of premature decay." Shades of Beethoven and Alexander Pope! No one would deny artistic genius to Rich-

ard Wagner. At the age of thirteen he translated the first twelve books of the Odyssey for amusement; at seventeen his first production as a composer was performed at the Leipzig theatre; and at sixty-nine the music of "Parsifal" was completed.

Dr. Robertson is bound to show that Poe did not die of delirium tremens, and he characterises the statement of Dr. J. J. Moran, who was resident physician of the Washington University Hospital, where Poe died, as "an intelligent statement covering the details of a death due to brain inflammation or engorgement." But brain inflammation or engorgement is the condition of the brain and its membranes that is found in every case of delirium tremens that comes to autopsy, especially when the delirium has occurred in an individual whose resistance to alcohol has been impaired by prolonged use of that intoxicant or of drugs. The plain truth is that our greatest poet used alcohol intemperately and opium indiscreetly; that he died of delirium tremens; that his father drank excessively; that his conduct, drunk or sober, did not meet with the approbation of all those who knew him, possibly even not of the majority. But he put the United States of America on the literary map and he put it there more indelibly than any individual who preceded him or who has so far followed him. This is not the opinion or judgment of the writer, but of countless students and critics who have written of him during the past half century. Why whitewash the crown that posterity has put upon his brow? Why not leave the golden shimmer of the original burnish?

Merely to expose the quality of the whitewash which Dr. Robertson has applied to the poet's crown, and not from any desire to call attention to the weakness of the man who wears it, one incident may be cited of Poe's action as a critic. This is his estimate of Estelle Anna Lewis, a Brooklyn poetess, of whom he wrote:

All critical opinion must agree in assigning her a high, if not the highest, rank among the poetesses of her land. Her artistic ability is unusual; her command of language great; her acquirements numerous and thorough; her range of incident wide; her invention generally vigorous; her fancy exuberant; and her imagination—that primary and most indispensable of all poetic requisites—richer perhaps than any of her female contemporaries.

Such an estimate could only go to prove that critics often make mistakes and that Poe as critic was not the peer of Poe as poet and story-writer, were it not for the fact that this poetess, prior to the appearance of the notice in which the quotation appeared, had paid Poe one hundred dollars to review one of her books, and when she complained of his failure to do so he remarked that if he reviewed her rubbish it would kill him.

Such incidents could be multiplied. But to what purpose? Poe was a genius and he is immortal. As a man he was a pathetic figure, a moral weakling. It can not add to the lustre of his immortal genius to expose the pitiful skeleton of the man over whom the dust of time has spread a merciful veil and the radiance of his crown has cast an indulgent shadow. Nor can Dr. Robertson enhance the world's estimate of the writer by piling up words to convince it that Poe, the man, was full of fine qualities only, but at times committed acts for which he could not be held responsible because he was under the temporary influence of a "neurosis"; and that this "neurosis" had no effect upon the quality of his writing.

§

Edgell Rickword's biography of Arthur Rimbaud, the decadent, is too laudatory, too apologetic, too condoning; but it reveals penetrative insight, sympathetic understanding, and a measure of critical acumen.

Rimbaud was a contentious, bumptious, conceited, selfish, pigheaded, insensitive young hobo who in three years of his youthful life wrote the best poetry of France since Baudelaire. He printed only one book, *Une Saison en Enfer,* an epitome of his mind's life. When he was eighteen he stopped writing and began wandering, scoffing at literature, regretting his part in its creation, and scorning recognition of a position among the writers of his country.

He tramped, he travelled with a circus, he was overseer in a stone quarry, and finally landed in Africa where he lived the last nineteen years of his life, pioneering, exploring, merchandising. Then, just as he was about to secure a modest competency and to see his dream of fireside and family come true, a parasite possessed him. When he reached Marseilles the surgeons amputated a leg, and he died soon after, in the odour of sanctity and in his thirty-eighth year. His devoted, pious sister, Isabelle, has told of his last days with fervid affection in a booklet *Mon Frère Arthur,* and Ernest Delahaye, who knew, understood, loved, and tolerated him perhaps more than any one, published in 1923 a volume which pleased both the critics and Rimbaud's friends. About the same time an industrious critic of French letters, Maurice Coulon, published a volume, *Le Problème de Rimbaud, Poète Maudit.*

Rimbaud has been dead nearly thirty-five years. His literary output is the smallest on record. His poetry, although generally admitted to stand beside that of Hugo, Vigny, and Musset, has no human interest; he does not sing of love, he does not chant the virtues of his country or its people. Probably not one reader in twenty is touched by *Les Illuminations,* and not one in ten discerns his thesis or his philosophy in *Une Saison en Enfer.*

What then is the explanation of this sustained interest in him? Why does posterity extol him and neglect Gérard de Nerval, who brought to the light of day a long hidden pediment of literature: the æsthetics of symbolism? The answer is

easily given. His "affair" with Verlaine is the human interest of Arthur Rimbaud. People like to read about him as they like to read *Town Topics* or *Le Cri de Paris.* Mr. Rickword is to be congratulated on rendering the theme with his foot on the soft pedal. Had he called his book *The Taming by Time of an Antinomian,* it would have been a comprehensive and a just title.

The wide dissemination of the Freudian theories is responsible in a measure for the keen interest of the reading public in sexual fixations, their manifestations and liberations. Rimbaud apparently got stuck on third base in the game of life, but there are many indications that he was stealing home when the bell rang.

VI

WARRIORS

LORD WOLSELEY, by *Maj.-Gen. Sir Frederick Maurice* and *Sir George Arthur.*
ROBERT E. LEE THE SOLDIER, by *Sir Frederick Maurice.*

THE biographies of men who make history are as a rule more remarkable for the "action" they display than for the thought they invite. History is not made by thinking about it: it requires the combination of thought and deeds. When a man is endowed with the capacity for both; when he lives at a time in which his country needs the intelligent effort of its children to carry on its traditions, and when fate has been kind enough to call one of them to service at such a time, the story of that man's life must be inviting, instructive and inspiring. All this is true of Lord Wolseley. Early in his career, at the time of the Civil War, Wolseley was sent to Canada to prepare for a possible war with the United States, which Abraham Lincoln, in his wisdom, prevented. Garnet Wolseley, from the time of his ensign's commission in 1852 a diligent student of warfare, availed himself of the opportunity to study it first hand which a visit to General Lee offered him. He rated Lee's military ability very high and from this meeting dated a friendship between the two, founded on admiration, which lasted until Lee's death. The biographer of Lord Wolseley is also the biographer of Robert Lee and some of the unqualified praise of Lee with which Sir Maurice sprinkled his book had its origin in Wolseley's admiration of the Southern leader.

But Sir Maurice is not alone responsible for this biography of Lord Wolseley; he collaborated with Sir George Arthur,

and the combination of a military man with a literary student seems to have been a happy one.

It is perhaps unjust that the present generation should know Kitchener better than it does Wolseley; that it should place the one on a high altar of martyrdom and sacrifice, and practically ignore the other. Kitchener had all the odds in his favour; he was *the* man when the World War started; his death or disappearance reacted on popular imagination in extraordinary fashion, and the mystery of his end appealed to our taste for the fantastic and the incredible. But what Lord Kitchener did for the British Army, was started by Lord Wolseley; Kitchener put together the stones that his predecessor in the highest military rank in Great Britain, had assembled, and he built on the foundations which Lord Wolseley dug and prepared. At least, this is the statement of his biographers who surveyed the subject with apparent impartiality and integrity. Some authoritative authors have already passed judgment on the quality of the British Army during the days of the Boer War, and it may not be in all points favourable to the memory of their Chief; but if the courage and efficiency of the Army as these qualities were displayed in the Great War, were the result of Lord Wolseley's love for, and intelligent attention to, the needs and ethics of the Army which fought under the Union Jack, all our gratitude, our admiration and our praise should go to the man whose influence was still felt in 1914. Never could an Army, got together with the rapidity with which the British Army was formed in those days, as untrained as it was, and as large as it grew, have done what it did, in the way it did it, if some great heart and illumined mind had not been present at its early formation and at its origin. Lord Wolseley reorganised the British Army, he fought with all his power the "wicked" practice of buying commissions in the Army, he prepared a real system of mobilisation; he remodelled the machinery for supplying the Army with food and munitions; he gave a

stirring impulse to military education and practical training, and he directed the attention of statesmen to the problems of national defence and made them, as well as the soldiers and sailors, concentrate on it. His activities were incessant; his public life was long in years and rich in deeds.

Lord Wolseley was the typical example of the velvet glove covering a hand of steel. His outward appearance was that of a dandy, of a man more occupied with the cut of his clothes than with the fate of the world. Judged by his photographs he was precious and self-conscious, outwardly complaisant, inwardly arrogant; but his actions belied his appearance, although he harboured within himself a sort of dual personality. He had a keen inward sense of world-strangeness with a great desire to be in communion with the world; he had the tenderness of a woman, a devotion to and dependency upon his wife that was balanced by his happiness when he was at war; he had the strength of a lion in a frail body; the tenacity and obstinacy of a bull-dog and an indomitable courage; and withal he possessed the qualities of the thinker. He was neither boastful nor honour-seeking, yet he had taken his own measure early in life and without humility; he knew what he was worth to his country and to history, but he could not find it in him to push himself save by his own merit. He had one of the most important offices in the British Government, when he was still a very young man, and he did not attempt to use power or influence to raise himself to any undeserved honours.

The book takes in most of the great historical events of the fifty years that saw Wolseley active in his career, and as a survey of British history, no achievement could be at once more entertaining and more instructive. But what his biographers did not do was to explain some of the contradictions that Wolseley's personality displayed. They leave the reader with the impression that he had great powers, but also great limitations. The latter may have been a puzzle to those who

were intimate with him, but his biographers should have studied and explained them if they could. He may have inherited his "prettiness" from the grandmother "whose face was her only fortune" and his strength not only from the Wolseley side of his family which boasted of many a good officer, but also from his mother who had never been ill in her life and whose death left a gap in Wolseley's heart that nothing could fill. She was strong, but she was pious too, and she brought up her son in such fervour of the Church that his biographers say he never spent a day without reading the Psalms. He found a second mother in his wife, Louisa Erskine, to whom he was profoundly beholden. "When they were parted the hours were carefully counted until he should hold her hand again." All these made for manifold contradictions in his nature. Deeply religious, he thirsted for blood and war; adoring his wife, he accepted long periods of separation in the name of service; pre-eminently a man of action, he was capable of deep thought and vision.

Years before the War, he foresaw the power of Germany and he warned against it; he advocated the adoption by his country of some of Germany's methods which, interpreted with the common sense of his people, would have minimised fear of the growing Teutonic power and enabled them successfully to deal with it. But his voice was not always heard and his perception of the future not often heeded.

The biographers of Lord Wolseley have mixed a good dose of hero-worship in their book; but they have done it with a sure hand, and with so much discrimination and taste that it is never offensive. Sir Frederick Maurice was his companion for several years, his *alter ego* during the campaign of Africa, and his devoted friend when sickness and trouble came to Lord Wolseley. Thus, Sir Frederick's information was obtained directly, went through no deforming, exaggerating or reshaping process. Despite the gaps that occur now and then in the mental and moral formation of the hero, the book is invaluable

to the student of modern English history. It should prove illuminating to military men and diverting to the general reader. But the story is of a soldier not of a man. There must have been something particularly interesting to say about him as a man; there is about all childless husbands. And the foundations of his admiration for the novels of Rhoda Broughton might have been unearthed and re-pointed.

Some day we shall have a book on the religiosity of great warriors. Lee, Wolseley, Gordon, Cadorna, de Castelnau, will figure in it conspicuously.

§

Major General Sir Frederick Maurice has given a firm grip to the hands across the sea. His book does not purport to be a life of Lee but an appreciation of his generalship. Regrettably, however, he paints a picture of him as son, husband, parent and citizen, which his kin will perhaps not recognise, and which I believe is not a good likeness.

General Maurice has been studying for more than twenty years the military life of Lee, the campaigns he conducted and the battles he fought. Therefore it can not be said that he has indulged in hasty conclusions or snap judgments. For a soldier of his distinction, a student of military science of his information to say that the name of Robert E. Lee must be added to the roster on which are inscribed the names of those who guessed the secret of the art of war: Alexander, Hannibal, Cæsar, Gustavus, Turenne, Eugène and Frederick is praise indeed. A British soldier who places Lee above Wellington as a commander must be sure of himself and of his facts. Appreciation and estimation of this sort is food that nourishes the *Entente Cordiale*. It is so much more palatable and assimilable than the "one blood, common language" variety.

After a brief chapter on the Lees of Virginia, the burden of which is that the family had all the virtues save humour

and the immortal descendant all save the one that Hermes had to a superlative degree, he takes up at once Lee's training as a soldier, stressing his experience in the war of 1845. "No matter how sure a man may be of his nerves, he is the better soldier when those nerves have been tested under fire and found reliable and the better leader from the confidence in himself which such experience provides." Lee's nerves were tested and found perfect at Chapultepec. He returned from Mexico at the age of 42 with a reputation established. "And it was not confined to his own country. Representatives of the Cuban junta offered him the command of an expedition to overthrow the Spanish control of the island. Instead of accepting, he hastened to inform the Secretary of War of the proposal and his reasons for declining it."

Commenting on trained and untrained commanders, General Maurice writes, "Courage, physical and moral, common sense, readiness to accept responsibility, the power to grasp quickly the essential of a situation, and to form speedy decisions, these are not gifts which are confined to regular soldiers nor have many regular soldiers possessed all or even most of these gifts. The possession of them will make any man a leader whether in peace or in war." He quotes with fullest approbation General Forrest's explanation of his successes: "I get there fustest with the mostest men," and adds, "We have in those eight words the gist of many volumes of Jomini and Clausewitz."

Discussing John G. Nicolay's explanation of Lee's action in April, 1861, in resigning from the army and accepting command of the Virginia troops, an action which, according to Nicolay, came from selfish motives, General Maurice comments, "It would be difficult to compress into a similar number of words a greater misrepresentation of fact." His latest biographer says of Lee's decision and conduct, "He had but one thought, 'What is my duty?' No motive of self-interest entered his mind. He was prepared to make any and every sacrifice."

He takes up briefly the problems of the Confederacy. In the author's opinion the Civil War throws valuable light on what should be the nature of the relation between the statesman and the soldier in a modern democracy at war. The claim that the soldier should be left in free and complete control is ridiculous. The general direction of a war should be in the hands of one man, and in democratic countries that man must be a statesman and his supreme qualification should be the ability not only to co-ordinate military, naval and air forces but to develop and co-ordinate all the physical and moral resources of his country. Lincoln, after he had been taught by experience, was the model of such a statesman. Lee was the model of the perfect soldier. General Maurice then proceeds to prove the latter statement by describing the Defence of Richmond, the first offensive, the first Maryland campaign, the battle of Chancellorsville and the second invasion of Maryland.

Before recounting Lee's catastrophe, General Maurice interpolates a most interesting chapter on Delay as a Weapon of War. After Lee had given up hope that the defeat of the Army of the Potomac on Northern soil was possible, his strategy sought new aim. He no longer attempted to thrust battle on the enemy, on the contrary he sought delay that he might exhaust their patience: "If the campaign of 1862, from Richmond to the Potomac, is a model of what an army inferior in numbers may achieve in offence, the campaign from the Wilderness to Cold Harbour is equally a model of defensive strategy and tactics. Some commanders have excelled in the one method, some in the other; few in both and amongst these few must be remembered Robert E. Lee."

Pleasant reading for an American, this book by Britain's foremost military writer. Some will shrug their shoulders and say: "The English were always sympathisers with the South," but this book is not the product of a biased mind. It was not conceived in emotion, generated by bitterness, or prompted by prejudice. It is the deliberate judgment of a

man temperamentally adapted to the task he set himself and intellectually fitted for it by his training and experience. So long as he sticks to the field in which he is expert he is persuasive and convincing, but when he goes into history or psychology he is neither.

General Maurice would have been wisely counselled had he confined himself to Lee, the Soldier, as the title of the book intimates was his intention. He may have taken his measure correctly as a warrior, but I am sure there is little justification for "Lee was never what is called a man's man. He did not drink, he did not smoke, he had no taste for the ordinary amusements and weaknesses of the male sex." If he were that sort of a man, the less said of it the better. It is a man's human side that testifies his godship. Some one should enumerate the "weaknesses of the male sex" that there may be no doubt in readers' minds what they are.

General Maurice would have us believe that Lee was a studious, serious, silent, solitary, super-man who devoted his nights to study and contemplation, his days to action and prayer. He was probably not so playful as Osler and more of an anchorite than Anatole France; it is likely that he was more abstemious than Grant and that he had less humour than Lincoln; but he had some of all their qualities in miniature and it is a pity he was not more liberally endowed for then he would have had imagination or vision. That was the great hiatus in the personality of Robert E. Lee; he lacked vision. He could run a complicated machine, he could get great efficiency out of it, he could keep it going even when it seemed to be worn out, but he could neither design nor assemble it.

Many will seek to fathom the process of reasoning, or find the source of information that led General Maurice to write: "He not only espoused but was the main prop of a cause history has proved to have been wrong. That is the tragedy of his life, and his conduct after the war makes it clear that he realised that it was tragedy . . . the whole tenor of his life

from the surrender of Appomattox to his death is evidence that he believed in his heart of hearts that his State was wrong in seceding." This is neither evidence nor testimony. It is merely rhetoric.

His country has already selected Lee for its greatest military executive and it is pleasant to witness a General of another great nation laying the oaken crown on his tomb, and it is gratifying that he can write: "Distinguished as was Lee's conduct while an officer of the Army of the U.S.A., splendid as was his career in the field, nothing in his life became him more than its end." He heard Lincoln's charge to bind up the Nation's wounds and he hearkened to it.

VII

EDITORS

MEMOIRS OF AN EDITOR, by *Edward P. Mitchell.*
TWICE THIRTY, by *Edward W. Bok.*
THE RIVER OF LIFE, by *J. St. Loe Strachey.*
JOSEPH PULITZER, HIS LIFE AND LETTERS, by *Don C. Seitz.*

EDITORS and publishers of powerful newspapers have unique opportunity to make their lives interesting. Many of them do. Some of them, like Henry Watterson, Wickham Steed and Georges Clémenceau write about their experiences, when they no longer take the world's pulse, shape public opinion and re-order society. Their memoirs and lives are of the most entertaining of all biographic literature; they know the art of writing; all their lives, they have been observing and studying character, heralding and shaping events; it has been their self-imposed duty to sit in judgment and the self-advancement urge of their fellows brings them into intimate contact with the important persons of their period. Small wonder they write entertainingly when their sun begins to set.

Few have reviewed their experiences more delightfully than Edward P. Mitchell, for many years Editor-in-Chief of *The New York Sun.*

When I read Mr. Mitchell's *Memoirs of an Editor* every page made firmer the conviction that I was companioning a great mind and a kindly heart. I recalled something that Mark Twain said of Anson Burlingame: "His outlook upon the world and its affairs was as wide as the horizon, and his speech was of a dignity and eloquence proper to it. It dealt in no commonplaces, for he had no commonplace thoughts.

He was a kindly man, and most lovable. He wrought for justice and humanity. All his ways were clean; all his motives were high and fine." That is Edward P. Mitchell if I may estimate him from his autobiography. If he has any fault, it is that he is too affable. He is a tiny bit too polite. There have been proprietors of the *New York Sun* within the memory of man who did not have *all* the virtues, but no one would suspect it from Mr. Mitchell's book. The *Sun* that he writes about most entertainingly and instructively is the *Sun* for which Charles A. Dana got all the credit. Mr. Mitchell does not hint that the credit was unjustly allotted, but no one can read the chapters "How I Went to the Sun" and "The Newspaperman's Newspaper" without being convinced that it was. The *Sun* could not have been what it was in the days of its ascendency: a beacon light of newspaperdom, a stimulus and a joy to thousands, a scourge to scores, had it not been for Francis P. Church, Fitz Henry Warren, and William D. Bartlett.

But it is not the story of the *Sun* that Mr. Mitchell set out to write. His colleague Frank M. O'Brien did that, and any one who believes he could improve on it would be as daring or demented as the artist who believes he can improve on the Mona Lisa. O'Brien's story reflected the spirit of that newspaper as the portrait mentioned above reflected the soul of her who reminded Pater of Leda. However, Mr. Mitchell could scarcely tell us of himself without telling the story of the *Sun* too.

The volume is replete with personality studies of sages and cranks, philosophers and buffoons, experts and amateurs. Any one who is interested in the spirit of the Puritan, the pioneer, the pathfinder; any one who is intrigued by guessing at the truth, will be helped by reading the pages on Goldwin Smith. Any one who would like to clarify his hazy notions of paranoia will be aided by perusal of the pages on George Francis Train; any one who would make the acquaintance of a critic of letters to whom his countrymen should have ac-

corded the esteem that the French accorded Rémy de Gourmont and the British George Saintsbury, should read what Mr. Mitchell says of Mayo W. Hazeltine; any one who would learn of the forces that did more than anything else to deliver us as a nation from the spirit of parochialism should read his pages on Bunan-Varilla, the French engineer, who made possible the Panama Canal.

It is a book for a rainy day and a starry night; a book to be read in Watchapey and Washington; to accompany one on Lake Louise or the Atlantic. The author's wish has come true. It was that here and there some kind friends unknown might find in his book something as interesting for them to read as it was for him to remember. If he had as much pleasure in writing it as they have reading it, Edward P. Mitchell is a giant joy-creator.

§

Mr. Mitchell is a modest man. That can scarcely be said of Mr. Edward W. Bok. He is proud of his accomplishment as editor, prouder of his success as uplifter and proudest of the masterfulness which he displayed in piloting his ship of life through troubled waters and adverse currents to a safe port and serene haven. A few years ago he told about these various successes in a fat volume entitled *The Americanisation of Edward Bok*. Now he rewrites his autobiography and calls it *Twice Thirty: Some Short and Simple Annals of the Road*. Simple is a more appropriate adjective than short. Mr. Bok is pleased with himself. He was well born; he is of a nation that has been a parent in most things. It invented golf; it was the founder of the modern school of music; it furnished us with our fundamental institutions; our Federal Constitution; the Declaration of Independence; our State constitutions; our freedom of religion; our free public schools; our free press; our written ballot; our town, county and state system of

self-government; the system of recording deeds and mortgages; the germinal idea of the *Ladies Home Journal,* New York City and the Hudson River. In fact, it would be difficult to name anything or any one save the Ku Klux Klan and Mayor Hylan that the Netherlands did not originate. And it contributed a man who never knew fear: Mr. Bok.

Thomas Carlyle wrote that he could get a far more penetrating insight of a writer's personality from a portrait of the man, photographic or oleographic, than from his writing. I was never convinced that the sage of Chelsea was in the right until I saw the frontispiece in the book under consideration. It is labelled "At Twice Thirty." The legend could be replaced by "Self-Satisfaction" and beneath it, this quotation from the text might be pasted: "I have had too distinct a leaning toward looking for and discovering the faults in persons and then of becoming possessed with a mad desire to correct those faults." But neither from gazing at the portrait nor from reading the text am I moved to objurgation similar to that of the Apostle: Mr. Bok is not a hypocrite; though he believes it is the beam that is in his brother's eye and the mote that is in his own. Nevertheless it will occur to some that at times he goes dangerously close to hypocrisy; for instance, "This book is written for my two sons." If Mr. Bok's pineal gland were opened and the day book diary of his soul extracted, it is safe to assume that the magician who could read it would find there an entry, "October 9th, 1924. Decided to publish *Twice Thirty* so that the world might have my four pages of biographical data from a reliable source." Then there is that chapter entitled "My Most Unusual Experience," in which Mr. Bok relates how he rescued a young American girl from the jaws of the lion and dragged her from the Coliseum, the jaws being a salacious Frenchman and the coliseum the promenade of the Empire in London. The *beau geste* reflects great credit on Mr. Bok, and he intended it should. That is the reason he published it. There can be no other. He does

not cotton to axioms even though they are of divine origin. His right hand has always known just what his left was doing.

Mr. Bok quotes Henry Ward Beecher as saying to him that wisdom comes at sixty, not before. Job said it before Beecher. Storing up treasure in Heaven has always been considered an indication of wisdom. Even in Heaven, I fancy, you can't have your cake and eat it. You can not insist upon having your reward now and also having it put to your credit in the hereafter. In fact we have the word of the Master to that effect.

I recall some years ago when I was in London Mr. Bok was much concerned about the street walkers of the Strand. A more vulturesome variety swarmed in Piccadilly Circus, but if my memory serves me it was those addicted to London's most famous street that engaged his reformatory urge at the time. I have looked in vain for some account of it in this book and in the "Americanisation." I am disappointed, for it would make an interesting companion chapter to "My Most Unusual Experience." The same title might have been used were the prefix lopped from the third word.

This matter of hypocrisy and Edward Bok intrigues me; indeed I may say it engrosses me, for the moment. In one of the most *naïf* chapters that adult ever penned, the author points out that the Edward Bok, Editor of the *Ladies Home Journal,* and Edward W. Bok, "creator of the American Peace Award of $100,000, Donator of a window in The Nieuwe Kerk at Delft, and Knight of the Netherland Lion" are two different personalities. The tastes, outlook, and manner of looking at things of the former were totally at variance with those of the latter. In fact, the two personalities waged incessant warfare. "My chief difficulty was to abstain from breaking through the Editor and revealing my real self. Several times I did so, and each time I saw how different was the effect from that when the editorial Edward Bok had been allowed sway. Little by

little I learned to subordinate myself and let him have full rein."

Mr. Bok (the present one, for Editor Bok "has passed out of being as completely as if he had never been") says it was a case of dual personality, and cites the notorious Miss Beauchamp sponsored by Dr. Morton Prince to support his contention. It won't wash. Edward W. Bok knew that the things that Editor Bok did were oftentimes cheap, sensational, undignified, unworthy of his heritage, birth, nationality, accomplishments, ideals. But he knew also that when the Bok that was worthy of them dominated the *Ladies Home Journal* for six months and its sales dropped eighty thousand, that it was up to him to let some yellow into his lily white character, or else lose his job. And he turned on the saffron spigot. No, Mr. Edward W. Bok, that is not dual personality, and I who say it gave as many years to the study of double personality and cognate subjects as you did to journalism. Some will say it was hypocrisy. I say it was expediency, and it was your contribution to popular hedonism. You and another great journalist, Dr. Frank Crane, had found out what "the people" want and you gave it to them good and plenty. By so doing, you and he have set back the clock of culture in this country about a hundred years.

The average reader, with a mind of his own as to what constitutes good and bad literature, does not have to be warned as to the danger of books like Mr. Bok's *Twice Thirty*. As a matter of fact, it is so unmeaning as to leave the reading public indifferent, but there is a latent danger in taking such writings indifferently. The same can be said of Dr. Crane's books. They are harmless in themselves, but the public is already too much inclined to take short cuts to every goal of life; short cuts to fortune, to health, to taste and to culture. It is the duty of the critics to show the hollowness and the danger of taking Mr. Bok's *Twice Thirty* seriously; of taking Dr. Crane's Talks as guides in life; and of taking radios, vic-

trolas and pianolas as forms of high art. Feeding the public what it wants is not always working for its best interest.

Diligent, careful reading of *Twice Thirty* has sufficed to convince me that Mr. Bok has never done anything that merited his disapproval. He may be sorry that he had a big head when he was born for it cost his mother a year on crutches, but he is not sorry he has one now. He is as satisfied with himself, his accomplishments and potentialities as was Nick Bottom, the weaver of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* In truth Mr. Bok reminds me of Mr. Bottom. He could play Pyramus, and Thisby, and the roaring lion, and like Bottom he can take pains, be perfect.

There is a certain amount of irony in the quotations Mr. Bok has chosen to put at the head of each chapter, possibly to give the book an atmosphere of culture. The most irrelevant one, the least *à propos,* is Plutarch's sentence, "Oh, that men would learn that the true speaker is he who speaks only when he has something to say." If Mr. Bok had written this as an epitome at the beginning of his book, and if he had meditated the advice of Plutarch and applied it to his own case, we would certainly have been spared *Twice Thirty.*

Occasionally, an amusing experience, an interesting anecdote, or a touching remembrance form a high spot in the book, but they are few and far apart. What interest or originality is there in "There must be a to-day before there is a to-morrow." "Life may depart, but the source of life is constant." Or, "To-day I can and do sleep the clock around once and sometimes twice a week"? Most of the incidents in his book are of the sort that ask to be forgotten, and when they are related with a lack of style which makes them flat, with a lack of humour which makes them pathetic, and when they all tend to moralise and preach—the case is hopelessly lost. In fact, it may be true to say that, had Mr. Bok a spark of humour or a particle of wit, he would never have written *Twice Thirty,* nor would he have published the "Letter that his father slipped

Tom when he left his mother for 'Somewhere in France.'" This letter is the most ludicrous and ridiculous thing that ever was done in a sober mood. It is meant of course to be touching, elevating, inspiring and to serve as a *vade mecum* to the young soldier, as an exorcism in time of temptation, and as a reminder of the "home-spirit" when the flesh should show itself weaker than the will. As it is, coming seven years after the end of the War, when the memories of the way in which the American soldiers understood the meaning of the word "leave" and the way in which they got acquainted with "life" is not yet gone, it is the most out of place document in the book.

It must be a satisfaction to know that, throughout his life, with only one exception, he has stood on the right side of it; that he has pointed out the right way; that he has been the good Samaritan to abandoned women, the successful prophet in his dealings with Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, the man of good judgment in his editorship of the *Ladies Home Journal,* the paragon of domestic qualities and the ideal father; yet, for our part, we feel that although Mr. Bok may be sincere in what he says, he does not say all, and what he does not say is exactly what we would like to know. There again we can point to the lack of harmony between his quotations and his achievement. "The author," wrote Tolstoi, "who succeeds in his work is he who describes the interesting and significant things which it has been given him to observe and experience in his own life." But the successful author is also he who reveals a soul to his readers, and that is where Mr. Bok fails lamentably. He reveals well enough the man a photograph would reveal, providing the photograph were taken at a time when he was ready to moisten his lips and look pleasant.

Mr. Bok has recorded his struggles and successes with evident veracity and truthfulness, but how much more interesting they would have been to us if he had transplanted them

a notch higher in the field of the emotional and intellectual efforts. The price he paid for the plot of land on which his house stands, and the seven bath-rooms he had built in it mean much less than the development of his ego from the point when a ride on a truck which saved him a five-cent fare constituted happiness for him, to that he reached later when he wanted the best of everything and was in a position to demand it. It is a common occurrence to be born in poverty and it is an achievement to rise above it, especially when the advance has been made honestly and in the open; but the soul should develop in proportion as the opportunities afforded by better connections and associations increase, and that is just what Mr. Bok does not reveal in his book; his mind is still on the same level as that of the young messenger boy in the Telegraph Company and his soul is still contented with a ride on a truck, as it were.

Bok's motto was "The good that I would I do; but the evil which I would not, that I do not," a drastic revision of Paul's confession.

The last chapter of *Twice Thirty* bears the heading, "Is It Worth While?" "Scarcely," is the answer, "if *Twice Thirty* is the antecedent of the pronoun."

§

A few years ago it would have been said that a career such as Joseph Pulitzer's could not have been staged anywhere save in this country. M. Coty, Lord Rothmere, Sig. Bergamini are examples of similar careers in France, England and Italy. Joseph Pulitzer galvanised the New York *World* into life, made it a power in the land and gathered about him a group of clever men, one of whom has written his life.

Mr. Don C. Seitz's book is not a satisfactory biography, but it is readable and it engenders thought and reflection. It neither reveals nor suggests the mystery and secret of a domi-

Painted by John Singer Sargent
Courtesy of "The New York World"

JOSEPH PULITZER

nant personality. He calls Joseph Pulitzer the Liberator of Journalism. For many years he was called the Libertine of Journalism, and worse than that. He deserves the one as richly as he deserved the other, no more so. The biographer, like the witness in court, should state facts, not conclusions. Joseph Pulitzer was an unusual man and he had an extraordinary career. Hungarian emigrant, without background or adventitious aid, he acquired within a quarter of a century, power, influence and wealth that were felt not only throughout this country but in Europe as well. Politics was his passion, property his obsession and power his ambition.

He was vouchsafed twenty years of public influence; he moulded minds, shaped opinions, conditioned decisions, germinated ideals; and they were twenty years of personal misery and decrepitude. Dying, he perpetuated his name by the establishment of the School of Journalism at Columbia University. It can scarely fail to be interesting to learn about such a man. Mr. Seitz with the instinct and experience of the expert journalist, gives the information in the first chapter, which he entitles "Characteristics." He moulds the clay, then animates it. As he hurls virtues into the receptive mass, he calls out their names loudly; as the limitations and defects steal in, he whispers or remains silent. Joseph Pulitzer had a genius for journalism and he was saturated with belief in liberty, equality, and opportunity; he was courageous, affectionate, hospitable, generous, indulgent and just; but he was also vain, arrogant, domineering, verbose, bulimious, tyrannical, self-sufficient, personally hypersensitive but insensitive to others' feelings; he was devoid of humour, and he wore a mask that fell off on the slightest encounter. He had acquired a dexterity in regaining it which often prevented adversaries from seeing that it had fallen. The sea of his life was always turbulent. When he was on the crest of the wave, his speech and conduct were hypomaniac; when in the trough, he was taciturn, unapproachable, uncommunicative, inert. He had a

firm intellect and an infirm temper; firm energy and an infirm body; a keen æsthetic sense and a contempt for his fellow man because he would not make himself in Joseph Pulitzer's image. "I have no friends," said he to one of his secretaries. "And this was in a great measure true," adds his biographer. He has friends now, and he will have more in the future; Mr. Seitz's book will make hundreds for him, and the institutions he founded, thousands.

§

It is natural enough that editors should like to talk about their doings. They have been compelled to be impersonal so long that they are impelled to gambol and frolic, to shout and sing, when they burst the barriers of their sanctums and do not have to return to them. John St. Loe Strachey has not ceased to be editor of "The Spectator," but then he was never impersonal. The volume devoted to himself, published a year or so ago, called *The Adventure of Living*, amply testified it. Now he has published a new volume about himself called *The River of Life*. He does not give a portrait of himself, and he eliminates as far as possible enumeration of facts, positive statements, sequence, logical or chronological, and conclusions. His diary is of the sort that might have been written for the pleasure of the soul and the contentment of the heart, with no further motive. He tells of his likes and dislikes, as they are brought to his mind by travel and reading; he does not indulge in ratiocination or in plans for the future. He is content to see life as a river, flowing constantly, everlastingly the same, everlastingly different, and his diary leaves the impression of a walk through a flower garden. One stops at interesting points, picks here and there a flower which will be kept as a memento, and which, being seen again, will recall a pleasant day.

In an antescript, Mr. Strachey writes: "If I am not careful,

some votary of the New Psychology will get busy on my Diary and prove that I am suffering from an inferiority complex." Not a chance of it! A lot of derogatory things about the Freudians may be said; yet though they are deluded, they are not imbecile; they are priority fanatics, but not blind. They know a superiority complex when they see it.

VIII

CLERGYMEN

WHY I AM A CHRISTIAN, by *Dr. Frank Crane.*
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A MIND, by *W. J. Dawson.*

AN editor once said to Dr. Frank Crane, who spent the first twenty-five years of his adult life as a Methodist and Congregational minister and the next twenty-five as a journalist: "If you will write a book on *Why I Am a Christian* and tell the truth it ought to be mighty interesting." Dr. Crane says he has told the truth. I say it is not interesting. Dr. Crane is a Christian because it is pragmatic, because it is usable. That is not a good or sufficient reason. One may be a Mahommedan or a Jew for the same reason. His species of Christianity is, he says, one hundred per cent practical. Mr. Ghandi's or Mr. Tagore's species of Hinduism has a similar percentage. "I am a Christian simply because I like it and I find it conducive to my happiness and my general welfare." That is a good reason for being a Jew.

Dr. Crane prides himself on his large-mindedness; he is beyond pride or prejudice. "If you should ask me whether I am a Trinitarian or a Unitarian, a Catholic or a Protestant, Fundamentalist or Methodist or Baptist, you might as well ask me whether I am a Guelph or a Ghibelline." When a man is omnipotent and omniscient he is all these, and none. He is not only the trunk of the tree of which these are branches (some of them gnarled, others withered), but he is the roots as well. In one of his daily sermons he says he left the church in search of adventure. Fortunately for him he left it while the going was good.

"I am happier here and now when I follow the principles of Jesus. I am wretched here and now when I reject them or doubt them." Does Dr. Crane think that any of his 25,000,000 readers believe that he practices the principles that Christ enunciated to His disciples on the mountain? If he does, such readers are incredibly credulous even for feeders on denutritionised mush. He took thought for the morrow when he shifted to a profession that pays him more in a week than he got in a year labouring in the Lord's vineyard. I am not contending the right to shift was not his. I am pointing out the obvious hypocrisy of his boast.

His reasons for being a Christian have very little to do with Christ. Indeed, for him Christianity is a point of view, an attitude of mind. It needs no God and very little divinity. His idea of Christianity is so largely matter of fact and so little emotional that his confession—which he wants us to remember is not an argument—can not make much appeal.

Reading *Why I Am a Christian* is like listening to a lawyer who has a fluent, persuasive vocabulary and who knows how to obtain the best effects from his argument. He carries his auditors along and they want to agree with him, but when he stops his monologue, rationalism claims its rights and the case is decided against him.

It is evident that a church which has had some of the greatest minds of the world at its head, which has lasted through centuries and wars, is based on a foundation more solid than one which could be destroyed by the argument of one of its members. Dr. Crane is a member of the church, but he refuses to recognise the authority of an organised religion. The fear of eternal punishment or the hope of never-ending beatitude have no bearing, he maintains, on his decision, because he finds the former foolish, the latter boring. Dr. Crane thinks he is the first man to shudder at the thought of an eternity spent in heaven, in a state of semi-stupor, singing forever to the music of harps. The church itself encourages no such

belief, but since the real meaning of paradise is unknown to man, a symbol has been adopted which no one tries to offer as dogma.

It is not because Christ is God that Dr. Crane believes in Him. It is because He has shown the author what sort of a person God is. It is malicious and pernicious for "a man with a million friends" to express such doubts as to the divinity of Christ. The world does not need a superman, the world needs God, and the figure of Christ is more important as a foundation for the church than any other doctrine of Jesus as a man could be. And there is no denying that the world needs a church.

It is the personality of Christ, what He represents as a man, the idea He gives of what God should be, what He has made of Christianity and the energy He has put into it, the universality of His doctrine and of His appeal and the beautiful story of His life which make Dr. Crane a Christian. He does not ask Christ to help him, to succour him, to save him and to give him happiness; he asks Him to give him enough force to help himself, enough energy to resist falls and enough strength to fight for his own happiness; he does not follow or wish to follow Christ and imitate Him, but he wishes Christ to show him how to get along on his way in the manner which is most pleasing to Him and of which He would approve.

Dr. Crane has made a note of most of the standardised beliefs of the world, of their ideals and fears. He labels them "delusions" and proceeds to smash them in their very foundation. That human nature is evil is a delusion of which reflection has purged him. Punishment and reward are delusions; goodness to be real must be positive; the fact that a man never lies, cheats nor hurts any one, never deceives his wife in thought or act, never does any of the things he should not do, is no proof that he has any goodness in him. The belief that competition is necessary to progress, which has been proved time after time, amounts to naught in Dr. Crane's esti-

mation; there is no superior class and the idle members of the community, those who have no need of working for a living, have been accursed by God. Dr. Crane thinks also that it is a delusion to believe that happiness resides in riches or in high positions; he advocates looking for happiness every day, as we go along, instead of storing up treasures on earth or happiness for the morrow.

All this leads us to wonder how much of the "Confession" is Dr. Crane's and how much has been gathered from the wisdom of centuries. Most of his arguments are old and familiar; he writes a long chapter, for instance, on the text of Abraham Lincoln: "God must have liked the common people, He made so many of them."

Dr. Crane has been writing pontifically so many years that he has come to believe that whatever he says is true. It is true because he says it. There is no discussion or argument about it; he knows. He is a gushing fountain of knowledge and adjectives. He is an oracle whose truth is not to be tested, but accepted.

"To be good, according to Christ's program, is to fight here; to take up one's cross daily; to fear not; to love much; to hold on, and to put forth vigour in every way." Had Dr. Crane added "and to get the money for doing it" it would be his own programme, admitting that writing four hundred words of twaddle daily is the equivalent of taking up one's cross. To fight here, indeed! "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on."

His reasons for belonging to a church are naïve to the point of childishness. They are: because it is imperfect; because its purpose is to disseminate the most important idea in the world; because he likes it and likes the kind of people that belong; because it is the oldest, most imposing and most beautiful of all the institutions of humanity. "It is in the church that we must seek the origin of every great movement for

human welfare." I suppose it is universally admitted that the French Revolution and the English industrial revolution were the two great modern movements making for human welfare. My information is the church did not have much use for the encyclopedists, and if Hargreaves, Arkwright, Crompton, Cartwright and Watt were of the church, history does not say anything about it. The church had nothing to do with Pasteur's discovery, which was the origin of a movement for human welfare which has lengthened the span of life nearly twenty years.

Here and there throughout the book, like freckles on the face of Juno, are sprinkled gems of wisdom. "All the great literature of the past has been tragic"—*Rabelais* and *Don Quixote,* for instance. "The fundamental insanity believed by the majority of the world to-day to be the truth is that the work of the world is to be done by defectives who are not clever enough to escape from work." How pleasant it must be to be so omniscient! Dr. Crane must admit that Lenine and Trotzky did not have that fundamental insanity. And how sane Mussolini is!

§

Mr. Dawson is a clergyman and the leaves on his tree of life are sere and yellow. When they were green they were smudged by the smokes of London and Glasgow where he pumped up emotion in Methodist Chapel and peddled rhetoric in Presbyterian Church, and thereby gained such fame as pulpit orator that he was called to Newark, N. J., where he ministered unto the needs of the parishioners of the Old First Church for twenty years or thereabouts. Now one of the dreams of his youth has come true; he is living in a simple house near a flowing stream, and the sound of its running water lulls him to sleep and its garrulous voice calls him at dawn. The other, that one day he would become a great

writer, he knows will not materialise, but he continues to write because that which was nearly an agony for Flaubert and an exhausting labour for Anatole France is not only a joy but a necessity for Mr. Dawson. To him, it is nearly a fundamental urge. Early in life while he was attending to the spiritual needs of the Wesleyans in the small towns of Devon and Cornwall he wrote poetry by the ream to save himself from the soporific effect of the thick, stagnant atmosphere of dulness that enveloped him. Fate made him a preacher, but his secret aim was to make himself a writer. If authorship of forty books entitles one to such designation, Mr. Dawson is a writer. Another writer whose career closely parallels Mr. Dawson's, save that Dr. Algernon S. Crapsey had the notoriety of a trial for heresy, recently wrote that he had never seen nor heard Mr. Dawson's name until the publisher sent him *The Autobiography of a Mind* for review. That is the only experience that Dr. Crapsey and the writer have had in common so far as I know save that we both read the book through in one sleepless night. But it provoked neither tears nor laughter in me as it did in his colleague. It provoked in me a series of interrogations. Why did he call his book the *Autobiography of a Mind?* Why did he stay in the Church upward of half a century? How did he reconcile his practices and his preachings? Why did a man so beholden to the ideas of intellectuality not do anything concrete to realise them? Why has a man who has written so extensively and has lived so conspicuously in the public eye been unsung?

To answer these questions it is not sufficient to say it was because he lacked humility; because he did not love his fellowman, because he had a superiority complex. Many men who have made a permanent impression upon their time bore with similar limitations and suffered similar infirmities; it must be that Mr. Dawson lacked the talent which his personality, conditioned by his conscious mind, proclaimed. Were his book a biography of the mind he would have ana-

lysed his failure to obtain the success as a man of letters which he believed his talent justified.

The truth is Mr. Dawson is an emotionalist, not an intellectualist. So far as I can judge from his autobiography he never did any constructive work to fit himself for a writer. Early in life, he began to externalise emotional states in writing and he has continued to do so ever since. Emotional states, unless they are panoplied such as those of Shelley, Rimbaud, Poe, Dostoievsky and countless others, interest only the possessor and those who love him or are beholden to him.

It is passing strange to hear a young Methodist minister of robust health say: "I can not imagine how I could have endured life had I not found early a means of self-expression in my pen. Life would be unendurable for most of us without some means of escape from ourselves. Some find it in golf, others in collecting stamps, others in netting butterflies." Others find it in cheerful labour in the Lord's vineyard and that is where it is becoming for all clergymen to find it. If their quest is unsuccessful then they should find other employment. *Tedium vitæ* is the most unbecoming disease for a priest, and if he has it he should not talk about it.

Mr. Dawson's father, hard-shelled, self-sacrificing, saturated with a spirit of service, was able, largely through the resourcefulness of an industrious, pious, tireless wife to put aside every year a few shillings. When the legacy came to his son, then pastor of a Church in London, it was quite a tidy sum. He promptly gambled with it and lost. "It was a very pious man of most gracious manners who first persuaded me that it was a foolish thing to buy shares and stocks for honest investment when I could buy a hundred times as many shares on margin. So I bought shares in a gold mine in Africa and a coal mine in Australia." There is a *naïveté* about this that is equalled only by his account of his exaltation on the discovery of the word ineluctable and the pleasure he had in using it.

Mr. Dawson had the conventional Christian attitude toward avarice, holding that it is the root of all evil; but he also realised that without money there was no flowering of the softer and more delicate amenities of life. How much mental misery might have been spared the poetic pastor had he, in one of his trips to Italy, "whither I went on all possible occasion," come upon the story of one Francis Bernardone. One day while Francis was still a boy he had an emotional crisis which in its genesis was not unlike that which Mr. Dawson had when he became conscious that something mysterious was happening to himself. "I—the essential Ego, the thinking Self—was passing out of my body." Some of Francis' constant joyousness might have crept into his soul, and the enthusiastic love of poverty which was the keynote of the character of the Poverello of Assisi might have heartened him in many hours of apprehension. But though he had long loved Francis and year by year sought his shrine, and even lectured in his own monastery he would never have succeeded in assimilating his spirit.

When Mr. Dawson approached his fiftieth year, he had an emotional experience of a kind that has often been described; some call it conversion, others seeing a light. He who had an insatiable appetite for pleasure now learned that there was a great difference between pleasure and happiness. For the first time in his life he was completely happy: he had discovered the poor and the sinful and he was moved to deliver them, to succour them, and to purge them. For the first time, he found himself invaded with a spirit of service. He coveted martyrdom for the uplifting of the South London poor. He would devote his strength and the remainder of his days to put in the way of recovery those who had been bruised and battered out of human shape by a terrible misfortune or more terrible vices, and those past cure, he would absolve from their sins and bury. It was all a wonder and a wild delight—while it lasted. But like all emotional states it was transitory.

Perhaps nothing conveys Mr. Dawson's subjugation to the emotional states like his experience with Roosevelt. The latter talked to him of the virtues of one of his books, *The Quest of the Simple Life,* which apparently impressed the President as did Pastor Wagner's classic. The author was forced to the humiliating confession that he had totally forgotten it. The phase of thought and feeling which had produced the book was past. The late Marcel Proust and Mr. W. J. Dawson would not have been congenial! The twelve years that he spent as pastor of the Congregational Church in South London added to his reputation as a pulpit orator and he says that they were marked by great intellectual growth. We have to take his word; there is no display of it in his autobiography.

At the end of this period he came to the United States to lecture. He looked upon Newark and saw that it was a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariot. New Jersey's metropolis said, "Rise up, come away," and he came. Whether he found it the rose of Sharon or the lily of the valley we shall not know until his next book is published, but it is safe to assume that he liked it better than South London. We trust he found there "that rare kind of friendship which is rooted in intellectual intimacy," and that he encountered people interested in the kind of thoughts most vital to him, so that he was not forced, as he was in London, "to relatively low levels of conversation." Had Mr. Dawson called his book *Recollections of Emotional States* it would have been far more fitting than *The Autobiography of a Mind.* The reader who can divine the writer's mind from this book has perspicacity and penetration that I do not possess.

From the photograph of the frontispiece, and from the lines of the book, I gather that Mr. Dawson was leonine externally and feline internally; that he had great sensitiveness to verbal intoxication and that always logorrhœa threatened to exhaust him; that there was within him a big hedonist and a little puritan, that the latter sat in adverse judgment of the for-

mer at all times, and tried to trip him when Mr. Dawson was not watching his step; that he was sensitive as a child and self-conscious as a man; that his ear was not attuned to the reproofs of life and that his eye constantly mistook the comb for the honey.

IX

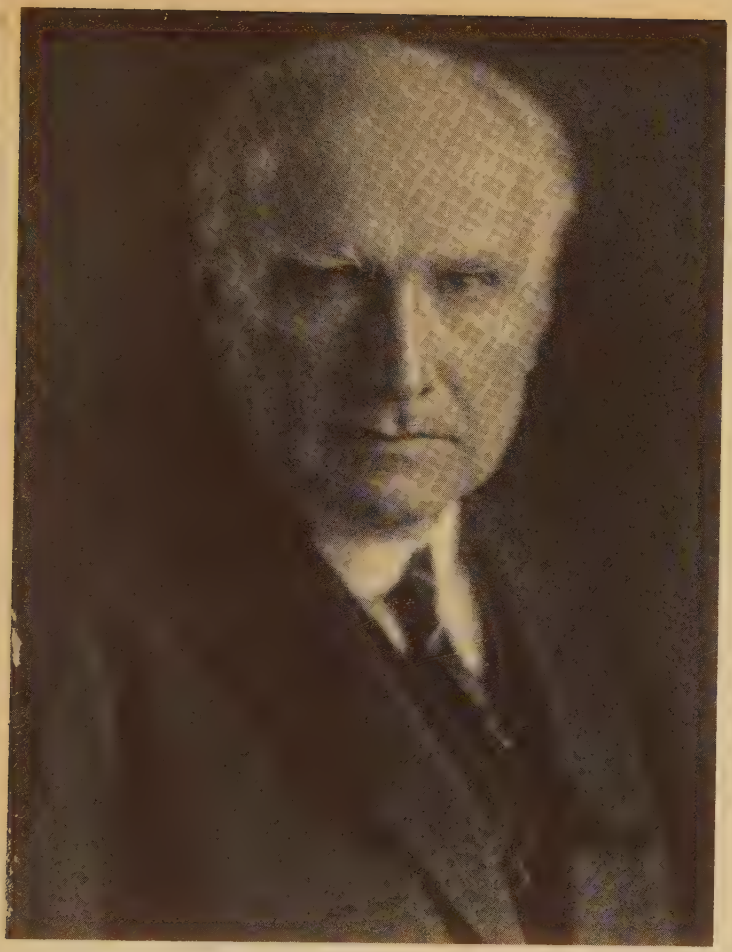
ARTISTS AND MUSICIANS

MY MUSICAL LIFE, by *Walter Damrosch.*
IRVING BERLIN, by *Alexander Woollcott.*
SUNLIGHT AND SONG, by *Maria Jeritza.*
WITH PENCIL, BRUSH AND CHISEL, by *Emil Fuchs.*

NEITHER Mr. Damrosch nor Mr. Berlin may admit that he likes to be bracketed with the other, but expediency suggests that it be done here.

My Musical Life does not profess to be an autobiography though it is a more revealing one than many that purport to be autobiographies. Leopold Damrosch, the father, was forty years old when he determined to find out if a living and a career could be made for him and his family in the land of the free, and in the home of the brave, so he came to the U. S. A. The way Walter, the author of this book, feels about the country of his adoption may be gathered from the opening sentence, "I am an American musician and have lived in this country since my ninth year." Judged from his book his life has been an interesting one. He has been on terms of intimacy with all the great figures in the world of music; we read that Liszt, Wagner, von Bülow, Clara Schumann, Taussig, Joachim, Auer, Haenselt, Rubinstein, when they were in Breslau, generally stayed at the Damrosch house, and he has known most of the great musicians that have favoured us with their talent.

Of it all he makes a charming kaleidoscopic picture, in which nearly every musician of note the past fifty years passes in review:



Photograph by Gutekunst

WALTER DAMROSCH

"It was not until midnight that we accompanied Liszt through the park and the lovely Goethe Garden back to his house. It was a gentle summer night with a hazy moon giving an indescribable glamour to the trees and bushes, and suddenly Liszt laid his hand on my shoulder and said 'Listen!'

"From the bushes came the song of a nightingale. I had never heard one before and stood spellbound. It seemed incredible that such ecstatic sweetness, such songs of joy and sorrow, could come from the throat of a little bird, and to hear it all at twenty-four years of age and standing at the side of Liszt! Dear reader, I confess that to-day, thirty-five years later, I still thrill at the memory of it."

The chapter on Lilli Lehmann is delightful. He draws a picture of the stately Lilli in Pittsburgh, dressed in white, ready for her appearance as Brünhilde, covered from head to foot with soot, and at the same time he gives us an example of ready wit and graceful gesture. Lehmann insisted it was not Frau Engelhardt's fault though she perpetrated the outrage, and that it was wrong of Damrosch to discharge her:

"Slowly I allowed myself to be persuaded and at the psychological moment gently left the dressing room, giving Frau Engelhardt a comprehensive glance which she understood."

We realise what a diplomat was lost to the service when we read:

"Outside the dressing room I found my faithful Hans, son of my prompter, Goettich. I gave him some money and told him to run to a florist and buy a bunch of the whitest flowers that he could find and to bring them to Madame Lehmann with my compliments."

We get interesting glimpses of the tribulations attached to the life of a musician in New York over fifty years ago:

"I enjoyed my weekly rehearsals in Newark immensely, although horse-cars, ferry-boats, and trains made the trip in

those days a cumbersome one. But after each rehearsal, Mr. Schuyler Brinkerhoff Jackson, the president of the Society, Mr. Shinkle, the secretary, my dear old friend Zach Belcher, enthusiastic tenor and music lover, Frank Sealey, my pianist and since then for so many years accompanist and organist of the New York Oratorio Society, used to go with me to a nice German beer saloon near the railroad station where, over a glass of beer and Swiss-cheese sandwiches, we waited until train time and discussed the welfare of the Harmonic Society and music in general."

In his efforts to familiarise the American public with Wagner's music, he had many amusing, discouraging and thrilling experiences. Great singers there were in those days—Fischer, Sachs, Brema, Alvary and Gadski. With the coming of Melba, a successful combination of the French and Italian was made with the German school and we read of that remarkable group of singers, Jean and Edouard de Reszke, Bispham, Nordica, Schumann-Heink, and of performances of "Tristan," "which came as near perfection as I ever hope to witness. . . . At the close we were so elated that all concerned kissed each other ecstatically after the last curtain fell."

And how touching his account of a concert in Monte Carlo:

"Jean de Reszke was in the fifth row of the parquet, and as I came to the 'Prize Song' in the Meistersinger Overture which he had sung so often and so ravishingly in New York, I could not help but turn around to look at him. He gave me an immediate smile, but the tears were running down his face."

Mr. Damrosch may accept the assurance that he is wrong in thinking many of the happenings described may prove dull reading; there is not a word in the book most readers would be willing to part with. He did not need Mr. Roosevelt's letter to establish his Americanism. But as a cosmopolitan, a citizen of the world, we must tell him that the little fireman he brought from the wings with Materna could not possibly have

said "Be jabbers." Occasionally Irishmen will say "Be jabbers," but the introduction of the extra "b" is a reflection on the good English they justly pride themselves on using.

Up until the time *My Musical Life* appeared, we believed editors and statesmen had a monopoly of writing the most interesting reminiscences; but Mr. Damrosch's book suggests that the belief is not well founded.

§

As Irving Berlin is American music, this biography is as much the story of the development—or rather, the birth of national music—as it is of its creator. It is more a panegyric than a biography. The fact that Irving Berlin, Izzy Baline, was born in Russia and brought to this country when he was a few years old, after his village had been destroyed by fire, makes him all the more an American figure. He had, blended in him, the characteristics of his race which have given to his music the touch of sadness and the occasional suspicion that its author is feeling sorry for himself—self-pity being, in Mr. Woollcott's idea, one of the fundamental qualities of the Russian Jew—and he has added to his inherited qualities the "pep" the "jazz" and the optimism of his adopted country.

The Story of Irving Berlin has been written by a friend, and friends despite the adage have a way of being kind and indulgent which is all to their credit, but which lessens somewhat the value of the adjectives of praise they are tempted to use. According to Mr. Woollcott's study, Irving Berlin is as nearly perfect as a human being can be. He has the detachment, the disinterestedness, the temperament, the lack of sense of time and the etherealness of the artist. With those, he combines a business acumen, a practicality, a flair and a knowledge of the value of publicity of one who is determined to make a success in business, and to have an income larger than he can spend. These qualities do not clash in Irving

Berlin; they make concessions to each other, and the result is a quiet, keen, sensitive looking young man, who seldom raises his voice and never hurts the feelings of any one—whose eye surveys the acting of his characters on the stage and the credit and debit list of his company's returns with equal comprehensiveness, whose ears are sensitive to good music but refuse to be "sold" to a piece that will not be popular, and whose soul is everlastingly travelling from Florida to Europe, from Virginia to Atlantic City. He is a composer and a musical publisher. The two functions can be made to work hand in hand: Irving Berlin has done it. As a composer he publishes his own music, and as a publisher he accepts only his own compositions: they are sure to sell.

Mr. Woollcott lingers lovingly on Irving Berlin's youth. These early years, spent in the tenement house of Cherry Street, are well pictured. We like the devoted mother who had a sense of responsibility and a sense of humour. She had to laugh at this absurd country which was paying handsomely for her youngest child's music while she, industrious and economical, had a hard time to keep together the bodies and souls of five hungry children. When she went after much effort to hear Irving Berlin play on Broadway—after he had shed for good his waiter's coat—and heard the applause and saw the little figure of her son on the stage, she went home with the impression that somehow New York was "picking" on her Benjamin. These years were hard ones for young "Izzy." He had to contend with the sense of inferiority engendered by his meagre earnings; he had to stand the rebuke of the young emigrants who feel as Sophomores feel toward Freshmen; they have just been through the period of acclimatisation, and no sooner have they found their way about in the new land than they turn and scowl at those who come after them.

A characteristic trait of Irving Berlin was the manner in which he was accidentally drowned in the East River. When

he woke up in Gouverneur Hospital, his fist was firmly closed on the five pennies he had just obtained from the sale of newspapers. This is the story of Irving Berlin in miniature. He would be drowned mentally in the composition of his music—at the same time, he would never lose sight of his material achievement. His music must sell.

Mr. Woollcott has no timidity about saying that Irving Berlin is a genius, and we are nearly ready to agree with him when we hear that the greatest of American composers can neither read nor write music. Some who have heard his compositions will say "I knew it." Homer could neither read nor write, and his poetry has stirred the hearts of thousands of generations. But if Carlyle was right that genius is unconscious of its excellence, Mr. Berlin would not qualify. Yet it is genius more than art which has made Irving Berlin so popular. And his popularity is due, largely, to his sense of the apropos. He catches a familiar American expression, he allows it to say itself in music in his mind, and when he has caught the rhythm that will make feet, young and old, want to beat time to it, he has created a "best-seller." His genius rests on his musical interpretation of American everyday life. His songs are a monument to American language; they are as national as baseball and chewing gum; Irving Berlin is the pioneer of modern American music, and not only Mr. Woollcott, but a few of the great musical critics are hoping that his composition in the form of an operatic score may some time be heard in the Metropolitan House. But, of course, that would be in the distant future, and those who love real music will be thankful that they will be spared the ordeal. Mr. Woollcott would never call it that, however. He believes in Irving Berlin, not only as a successful interpreter of a passing craze, but as one who will live. He thinks that the musical historian of the year 2000 will find the birthday of American music and that of the creative ignoramus Irving Berlin to be the same. And if it be objected that he was born in Russia

and can not be really American, his admirers will reply, probably, that if the musical interpreter of American civilisation came over in the foul hold of a ship, so did American civilisation.

Little of the qualities of heart and mind of Irving Berlin are discussed in this biography. Mr. Woollcott has been so intent on the cortex of Mr. Berlin's life that he has forgotten to show us the marrow of it. He is too young, says his biographer, to be loaded with the usual embellishments that human kindness lavishes on those who have just passed away, to give him as Philip Guedella said somewhere "the studied discourtesy of a premature obituary," but throughout we can feel that Irving Berlin's qualities of heart are numerous, that his kindness is great, that his friends are many and his friendship valuable.

When Mr. Woollcott gets into his subject, he becomes less and less self-conscious, and more and more likeable. He has touches of sentiment, of humour and of keen observation which come on the reader unaware and are therefore the more delightful. The story might have been entitled, "From Rags to Riches," undoubtedly; but it would have given an idea of something spectacular, and that was unnecessary.

But like all biographers who are prompted by friendship while their subject is still alive, and who are chiefly preoccupied with the personal side of their effort, Mr. Woollcott has lost a real opportunity to point out the value of the contribution of the negro to ragtime music; this would have afforded a certain amount of colour, of which the book is sadly in need. Although he is a dramatic critic doubtless he has definite views about the subject, and he could readily have got an incentive from the preface to James Weldon Johnson's book, *The Book of American Negro Poetry*. He might equally well have attempted a summary of the birth and growth of jazz. Opinions are widely split on the value of such music. To some it appears as part of the American nation, and they can see

beyond it, a taste for achievements higher than mere material comfort; but others shake their heads, discouraged. They do not believe that jazz is the way to anything worth while or lasting; they lament the efforts of American composers to deprave the taste of their countrymen, and shudder at the success attending the efforts. Mr. Woollcott would have earned our gratitude, had he expressed some views on the question. But then, he might have had to admit that the only picture he could give of Irving Berlin was that of a business and social success.

§

It is the fashion among the famous artists and actors of our time to write their lives which, appearing while they are at the apogee of their success, promote their artistic and business interests, and reveal the personality of the writer at the time when his name is constantly in the eyes of the public. As Maria Jeritza says in *Sunlight and Song* there is no denying that reminiscences are fresher when "the laurels are green, and personalities and events described are alive in the public mind." Why should an artist wait until his career is finished to write his memoirs? But the point which might be contested is the desirability of publishing such writing when it is without merit and when it can interest only the person who writes it, or those mentioned or discussed in it.

Sunlight and Song is one of the most uninteresting narratives of stage life that has ever been published. It is neither more nor less than a record of Maria Jeritza's creations and interpretations, comparisons of her waistline to those of other prima donnas, assurances that her hair is all her own, except of course when she wears a black wig—and even then she has her own—and auto-appreciation and repetition of the flattering things that others have said of her.

There is no intimate or personal recollection, no confession or avowal. Of her own life, not a word, so that neither the

reports of gossip nor the known facts about her personal record are denied or sanctioned; and despite oft-repeated beliefs that artists should not meddle in politics, and that "art and politics have nothing in common, but sometimes they have" we have more of the too-well-known story and tragedy of the Emperor of Austria and his family than we care to have, especially as it is viewed from an altogether prejudiced angle. To crown the insipidity of *Sunlight and Song,* either Maria Jeritza or the translator has strewn it with the American use of superlatives, so that a good teacher is always a wonderful teacher, a wonderful singer and a wonderful woman.

It would be harmful to the career of a prima donna in her full maturity, with a prospect of many years of success ahead of her and a valuable list of successes behind her, to tell the truth about her fellow-artists or even about herself. So with one exception Frau Jeritza gracefully avoids the subject. She knows that a giantess could scarcely play the rôle of the heroine in "Madame Butterfly," so she willingly admits it would be impossible to do it better than Farrar did it.

However, Madame Jeritza is no poorer an autobiographer than her semi-countryman, Emil Fuchs. Both in their different lines succeed in obstructing their personality under the bulk of the personal pronoun "I," and neither reveals anything not known already.

§

Mr. Fuchs' book mentions art occasionally, but most of the large volume is devoted to himself, his material success, his influential friends, his successful ascent of the ladder of fame. We do not expect the life of an artist to read like an Almanach de Gotha, or a Blue Book—made readable by the addition of gossip and the personal memoirs of their editor. Mr. Fuchs takes his readers through the years of his prosperity, without more than a passing glance at his youth, at his formative

years, at his friendships and enmities. His life has been a series of successes, and he is well aware of it. The accounts of his royal friends, of his noble admirers and wealthy patrons smack of the *nouveau riche*. Mr. Fuchs knows it is not good taste to appear conceited or vain—so he tries to be as genially simple as he can, but all the time he makes one feel he is on the point of exploding with pride. It is useless to deny that he has some reasons to be proud. He has made his name synonymous with other things than success—his work is art, and his art has a method, a tradition, and a foundation in painstaking love, in culture and in thorough understanding of his craft. It is because Mr. Fuchs could have given us a book on the artist which would be something more than the creation of a social puppet that we complain. Many authors can tell us of royalty and the English peerage, but few can make a contribution to art. It is to be admitted, however, that the former find a more ready market for their wares, but, since Mr. Fuchs' book was first written in the form of articles for the readers of the *Saturday Evening Post* who no doubt enjoyed them to the full, why did not the author, in collecting these articles into a book, revise them, leave out half the social world and allow his pen free play to discuss Art? What he has to say of art comes as a reward, it seems, after one has waded through the first half of the book.

"Art and music tend to supplement each other and to blend with and relieve one another—like the cold and warm hues on the palette of the painter. Or like the major and minor chord. In fact, creation was founded on this principle of positive and negative; it pervades everything, commencing with the colours of the rainbow . . . each needing its contrasting counterpart for the formation of a homogeneous entity, the structure of existence."

Later, he expands a little, but not generously, on the art of sketching:

"It is the gift of expressing with a few well-defined strokes a hasty impression; and if each of these strokes testifies to the mastery of the artist, the sketch often stirs the imagination by its freshness and spontaneity to a greater degree than the finished work. But to look at a sketch by a dauber is like having to read a sentence with every word misspelled."

This, with a few lines on art criticism, ends practically Mr. Fuchs' effort to write a book on the life of an artist. He has told us much we do not care to know, and little that interests us.

No one is expected to have whole-hearted love for one's competitors, but at times Mr. Fuchs oversteps the limits of *bon ton* by the pleasure he takes in pointing to the mote in his neighbour's eye!

X

ACTORS AND ACTRESSES

ELEONORA DUSE, by *Jeanne Bordeux.*
ELEONORA DUSE, by *Edouard Schneider.*
THE TRUTH AT LAST, by *Charles Hawtrey.*
A PLAYER UNDER THREE REIGNS, by *Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson.*
FOOTLIGHTS AND SPOTLIGHTS, by *Otis Skinner.*
TWENTY YEARS ON BROADWAY, by *George Cohan.*
LETTERS OF AN UNSUCCESSFUL ACTOR.
WEBER AND FIELDS, by *Felix Isman.*

ARTHUR SYMONDS once spoke of Eleonora Duse as "a chalice for the wine of imagination." She was just that, from the time of her birth in a railway carriage near Venice, to the day when she lay, dressed in white, in the mortuary chapel in Pittsburgh, and that she will remain for those who knew her, and for those who will know her through tradition and fame. None of those who heard her recite can forget her—none of those who did not should cease to regret it. Her personality was art come to life, and her life was devoted to her art, to love and to the theatre.

It has been said that no one ever *knew* Eleonora Duse. She, who unfolded her soul on the stage, remained a mystery to her friends; nevertheless, since her death, several biographies have been published, each giving personal recollections, "intimate views" and character studies of the greatest actress Italy ever produced. Of these biographies, two stand out more conspicuously than the others: Jeanne Bordeux's for its irrelevancy; Edouard Schneider's for its revelatory qualities.

The former is an objective and impersonal life of Duse. The author speaks of herself only at rare intervals, and with a

detachment which shows how engrossed she was in her subject. She focussed all her lights on the "grand artist" as she likes to call her. All the rest is incidental and serves only as background and contrast. The whole life of Duse is held within its covers, and yet it is not a life; it is an after image of some one who must have been great, but who is not obviously so under the pen of the author. The most touching part of the book is the end. We see Duse, a pathetic and lonely figure, fighting with all the strength of her exhausted body to return to Asolo where she had left all she loved. As she realised that the hope of seeing her beloved "Patria" again was becoming more remote, she mustered unsuspecting energy. All in vain. She was to die in America.

Jeanne Bordeux tells us in her preface that no one really knew Eleonora Duse—and we can see no justification for her amendation "no one in the world ever succeeded in knowing her as I did. . . . Each of her friends, intimates and actors, saw her in a different light; I saw her in all those lights merged in one, as from birth she unfalteringly followed her destiny, magnificently, humbly following the mission for which she was sent into the world." We should have preferred Jeanne Bordeux to tell us in what way she knew Duse—in what capacity she approached her—what special privilege of intimacy or confidence she enjoyed with the person who had few intimates, and those well known.

Duse was one of the most subtle and difficult persons to understand that ever lived in the public eye. Jeanne Bordeux gives no proof, either by quoting Duse's words, or by contributing a particularly enlightening biography, that she either knew or understood her heroine. Duse combined successfully a public life with a secretly guarded private life; no one ventured to trespass on what she considered her own garden; no one dared ask questions; few drew conclusions from what they imagined to be the truth. Jeanne Bordeux did none of these things, and for that she should be thanked. But why

ELEONORA DUSE

colour her statements of what may have been facts with the hue of gossip, the *nuances* of scandal? Hero-worship should not be carried too far, but there seems little necessity for reviving old affairs which may never have existed, especially when they serve only to whet the curiosity of gossip-lovers. It does not serve the memory of Eleonora Duse to discuss at length her relationship with d'Annunzio. The only high spot in the book, however, is connected with that, but might have been deleted of the unsavoury revelations which precede it, and the portrait of the artist left for our observation would not have suffered by the omission. It is said that long after her separation from d'Annunzio, Duse had an interview with him; at the end of the conversation, d'Annunzio said, taking her hand in his, and kissing it: "Not even you can imagine how I loved you!" And the Duse, serious, with that charming graciousness all her own, replied, "And to-day, not even you can imagine how much I have forgotten—you!" Apocryphal perhaps, but worth recording.

Despite her love for Eleonora Duse, Jeanne Bordeux will not see her as anything but a woman of genius in her chosen line—of ordinary talent in others. She brings out petty faults and weaknesses of temper which can not counteract what we know of her character and of her virtues. Whatever may be said about Duse, her admirers will not lose sight of the genius under the human form; of the suffering under the brave brow; of the tragedy in the soul; of the fundamental goodness and humility of a woman who could have had the world at her feet, and chose to carry it in her heart.

Jeanne Bordeux's book is not a contribution to literature, because her style is too tenuous, too thin, and she has few of the qualities of pen and of heart that make for good writing. In beauty, sentiment, style and grace, it can not compare with Edouard Schneider's biography. The latter is of so different a nature, so superior an attitude that it should be translated into English as it is already into German. It

seems a pity that Madame Bordeux's book should be the only one to speak of Duse to the American public.

M. Schneider's biography has no relation with Jeanne Bordeaux's. Indeed, it takes an altogether different viewpoint. It constitutes a testimony of psychological, moral and spiritual order; it is not the work of a foreigner who is unable to discern between truth and fiction in tales gathered here and there. Rather is it the direct story of an intimate friend of Eleonora Duse's last years; he was bound to her by bonds of absolute confidence of the mind and of the heart; and it is important that the English reading public should be confronted with M. Schneider's biography of Duse, important to establish the basis of a dignified admiration and attachment to the memory of the actress.

If Jeanne Bordeux has given the bulk of Duse's life, Edouard Schneider has supplied the flavour; she has worked on the warp and woof of the plain fabric; he has incontestably woven his dreams and embroidered his phantasy. His inspiration comes from his love for Duse, and his love has served him as proof, as canvas, as basis. His personal recollections of her have sufficed to make a beautiful book, and he has written it from the fulness of his heart, and from the wealth of his memory; his eyes still lingering on her picture; his ear still thrilling with the music of her voice; his mind still astir with the beauties she has revealed to him; his heart still under the influence of her genius for friendship.

His presentation of Eleonora Duse is the best adapted to the picture we seek of her; he has avoided the personal element; the human weakness; the hardships of everyday life; all he has wished to remember was the beauty of Duse's genius. At least, that is all he has wished to remember in this biography, but it calls for another one, from the same author. The mine from which he has drawn his inspiration, his memory, must be rich yet in wealth. M. Schneider has not insisted on biographical facts, but every modulation of

Duse's voice, every expression of her incomparable hands, and every utterance of her lips impressed him. He is a playwright of great talent, a poet of renown, and thanks to his magic qualities of pen, he has dramatised for us the poetry of Eleonora Duse's life. He loved her not as a woman, but as a goddess, and his book is redolent of self-contained emotion, of bashful adoration, of unlimited admiration.

He was not present at her end, but Pittsburgh and its realities are there; the contrast he has drawn between the woman and Pittsburgh, of all cities, where she was destined to die is one of the most inspired parts of the book. The last chapter has the touch of the poet—and Duse herself would have been pleased with it.

§

A clever actor who achieved greatness, an incorrigible gambler who never knew satiety, a big heart, a winning personality and a modest man are revealed in *The Truth at Last,* the record of Charles Hawtrey's life and achievements. As far as life is concerned, the actor-manager-gambler is reticent and diffident. His autobiography is carried along the most objective of lines, and the few words with which Mr. Somerset Maugham introduces and closes the book are more illuminating of Charles Hawtrey the man, than the complete and detailed story of his life as told by himself. It is not a model autobiography, though it tells with a certain amount of humour the failures and successes of the subject—and the failures are certainly the most attractive feature of the tale—but it is so impersonal an achievement, treated with such indifference that the reader feels the vanity there would be in trying to put more of himself into the reading than the author has put into the writing. It is well known that Charles Hawtrey accepted fame as an actor with a nonchalance that showed how little acting was his true vocation; but his remi-

niscences show to what height of success good will, tact, charm, personality and the lack of anything better to do, can take a man. The number of times he found himself and his company in the hands of the bankruptcy solicitors is only paralleled by the number of times he pulled himself and his company out of total failure by bold and intelligent backing of a horse.

Horse-races and stage-management, work and gambling, filled his life. The three graces that appealed so to Martin Luther played no part in Hawtrey's life so far as can be judged from *The Truth at Last.* Only those who knew and admired Charles Hawtrey will be able to enjoy the book with unmixed pleasure. They will have but to recall his ease and grace, his smile, his utter lack of affectation (or so it seemed on the stage) to find excuses for the stilted and unbending presentation of his autobiography. Evidently, Charles Hawtrey was no writer, and self-consciousness, which was unknown to the actor, was his constant companion when "he took his pen in hand." And then too, he lacks a sense of proportion although this may be due to his determination not to allow his personality, his emotions, likes and dislikes to creep into the record of his life. He devotes the same number of words to the death of his father, of whom he was very fond and to whose guidance he owed the best there was in him, as he does to the purchase of a blanket used on board a steamer; he mentions his second marriage, the War, the impressions left on him by Rome and America, much more casually than he does the receipt of a cheque from Australia, and his first marriage is mentioned only by way of reference. Timidity, self-consciousness, delicacy, lack of self-absorption? Probably a combination of all of them, and an extreme desire to live, to live rapidly, an unchecked interest in the display of life, in horses and in the life of the stage are responsible for that lack of *laisser aller* which is the greatest charm of autobiographies. It is *The Truth at Last,* and a truth that can prob-

ably compare point by point with facts, but it is not the truth about the man who was one of England's most beloved actors.

§

To read *A Player Under Three Reigns* immediately after *The Truth at Last* is like going from a dark cave where one gropes one's way around, into the sunlight and the open. Where one author is cramped by a pen and hampered in the choice of the words that make writing the natural expression of thought, the other allows words and ideas to blend in interesting, amusing or touching homegeneity, always harmonious and always natural.

Forbes-Robertson is fundamentally an artist and it is interesting to know that his first calling was to be a painter, a calling in which he displayed gift and talent and which he followed in his spare time. His reminiscences are of great interest not only because of the personality of the author, which is never accentuated in the written words but becomes fascinatingly evident between the lines, but also because Forbes-Robertson has known practically all the people who made art, literature and history in his generation; he has known them personally, some intimately, and his book is almost as much a review of the late years of the nineteenth century in England, in France and in America, as the record of his own life. He is never afraid to add to his memoirs a touch of emotion, an expression of a heartfelt sentiment, and when he does, he is more charming than ever. The layman possibly thinks that all the members of the theatrical world are jealous and envious of each other; occasionally, a movement is set afoot to help some actor who finds himself in poverty after a life of semi-luxury; benefit performances are given to procure a comfortable few years to a man who has given his talent without thinking of the future; but these movements are always in favour of one whose competition is no longer to be feared; and the general opinion is that

theatrical people are heartless, selfish and shallow. How quickly this impression is dispelled when we read the tributes Sir Johnston offers to his confrères of the stage. He must have had enemies, but he is careful to avoid wounding them and those whom he has liked have their names and their deeds lauded in *A Player Under Three Reigns*.

Some points of artistic or ethical interest are discussed comprehensively—one, probably the most important, is the author's contention regarding the appropriateness of actor-managers. He was one for years, not from choice, but from comparative necessity and his opinion is not only valuable, but based on experience.

Humour, wit, lightness, grace and knowledge of facts form a good foundation upon which to build an autobiography; these qualities fell to Sir Forbes-Robertson's share, and in so far as actor-biographers are concerned they seem to be the lion's share.

§

Footlights and Spotlights is a diverting autobiography which has much interest, reveals frankness and humour, and serves the reputation of Otis Skinner, but it will not enhance it. Its author is one of the intellectuals of the American stage and he could have written a better book. However, he is very much alive in its pages and so are the great number of people he has met and liked or disliked. His career has not been a series of successes, and he makes no attempt to conceal it. Apparently he took his troubles with optimism and cheer and he has woven these qualities into his narrative, which unrolls itself as a panorama of the stage-life of the past fifty years. A refreshing feature of the book is the author's appreciation and praise of others. He is generous, often magnanimous, always charitable. He has not liked every one, and those he has disliked get their deserts in moderation.

Otis Skinner's life has been a full and varied one, and it

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is a delightful journey to take with him through countries and behind footlights, travelling and acting, and praying with him that the new show may be a big success.

Mr. Skinner's book is another of those which suggests there is a great deal to be said in favour of writers who delay publication of their autobiographies until after their death. Undoubtedly all autobiographies would gain in quality if their authors devoted some of the years of their lives, given to preparation of what James Barrie calls "the greatest adventure of life," to shaping and perfecting the document. They would gain in objectivity if they waited until the fading of their star; they would gain in charm and in honesty if their pens were not guided by fear of the impression they will make and how it will affect their career; and meanwhile they may weave into the work, at leisure, the interesting information that those who make history, literature or art should transmit to posterity, and that so often needs the shadows of death to veil and envelop it.

§

Recently there has appeared in France a book entitled *Plutarch Lied*. I have no doubt he did, like all mankind save George Washington, but he was truthful when he said that the man who writes his life embraces the opportunity to celebrate certain moral qualities. The quality that George M. Cohan celebrates in himself is courage. He also prides himself on his industry. He was long of courage from his birth, or at least he was before he drained the tank so lavishly. Mr. Cohan is less engaging when he tells how he achieved his success, than when he is actually achieving it on the stage. He uses the personal pronoun, which Pascal said was hateful, more frequently than any author I recall, save Doctor Rainsford in his *Story of a Varied Life*. *Twenty Years on Broadway* reads like the inventory of a shop; so many pounds of tea, so many ounces of bromide, so many packages of ginger.

Nothing is said of their origin, their prices or their uses. The possessor owns them, it is his business how he got them, what they cost him in money and effort and what he is going to do with them.

Any one seeking enlightenment about personality, its perfections or defects should not go to autobiographies of actors: "I guess I am a ham, all right" said Mr. Cohan to himself after he had been mildly echoed by some of his fellow Thespians. I don't know exactly what a "ham" is but if he is one, he is an amusing one on the stage. In the past twenty years he has written, signed and produced thirty-one plays of his own. It is regrettable that he did not get some one else to tell how he did it.

What Mr. Cohan's book lacks more than anything else is the revelation of an ideal of life—an ideal other than the ambition to "put Broadway in his pocket." It may be said in his defence that he was not at a school where such ideals form part of the daily and hourly preoccupations, and that his childhood was spent in an atmosphere not conducive to taking thought of one's fellowman's spiritual needs and welfare. But there is a code of ethics which is particularly that of theatre-people and which is as altruistic in its conception as the Golden Rule; Mr. Cohan may conform his conduct to it, but one would not surmise it from reading his book. I admit he is a dramatist who has set a new style, a popular song-writer with a large following, a clever comedian, a resourceful theatrical technician, and that he knows a lot about the emotional wants of his fellow-citizens; but I am equally sure he knows little about himself, and what he knows he does not know how to tell.

§

A spiritual biography by one who prefers to withhold his name has recently been published under the title *Letters of*

an Unsuccessful Actor. Although it is replete with shrewd observations, timely comment, and evidence of sound thinking and wide reading, R. M. S., to whom the letters were addressed and who is responsible for their publication, should have interpolated the word "self-satisfied" between the last two words of the title.

There are fifty-six letters, and in one or another of them most of the famous players of the last thirty years are discussed. It would seem to be quite fitting that the first letter is in praise of R. M. S. and the last an attempt to answer the question: Is acting merely interpretative? From them both, and from the others, a comprehensive idea may be gained of the man who wrote them and why he was a failure in his profession. It is likely he would not admit he was a failure. "Unsuccessful" probably means that he did not gain the position his talent deserved, nor recognition similar to that accorded Lawrence Barrett, Henry Irving, Dion Boucicault, Beerbohm Tree, John Hare, Charles Hawtrey and scores of others who reached the top during his lifetime. Self-consciousness undoubtedly was his stumblingblock, and over-readiness to sit in judgment with a predilection for the adverse aided it. Possibly he was too original to be imitative; too immobolised by ideas to be plastic and malleable; too assertive to be taught and schooled. That is the impression one gets from reading this unusually interesting gossipy book which should appeal to all actors, divert many theatre-goers, and instruct some historians of the stage.

The writer is a man of opinions, most of them positive and difficult to dislodge, but the reader should keep in mind that they were written for a sympathetic, indulgent eye. This will suggest to him that many of the judgments may be discounted. "The theatre of the early nineties was dull as ditch-water." That may be, but it was as sparkling and bright as a noisy brook compared with the theatre to-day. "The ideal training for an actor is no longer possible to obtain." Was

it possible ever to obtain? Certainly not since the days of Hellenic supremacy. "Garrick undoubtedly was a man of culture and accomplishment, a master of the social art and full of parlour tricks. His anecdotes, his imitations, his studies of various types of bumpkinhood were cameos of characterisation. As a mimic he was supreme, but he was a charlatan and he mutilated Shakespeare." Posterity is even more tenacious of her opinions than is the Unsuccessful Actor, and they are better founded.

His pronouncements are not by any means all drastic and destructive. Many are mild, sensible and philosophic. "The greatest artist is he who obtains greatness in his portrayal of the greatest conceptions" is not original but it is felicitously expressed. Those who bemoan the decline of manners and morals will be likely to sympathise with him when he says: "With me manners were ever more important than morals." I fancy all members of his profession will agree. "It is when immorality flaunts its bad manners that I won't tolerate it." Such intolerance would be becoming to nearly every one, and no one will dissent from his statement that "a good play is one in which a credible, an interesting story is unfolded by means of living characters, psychologically developed by incident." If it were *either* credible or interesting most of us would vote it good!

The author occasionally indulges in prophecies and some of them have already come true. In 1918 he wrote: "Once let the Germans get the Allies talking around a table, during an armistice and they, not we, will have won this War, and within a few years will start preparing for the next."

He has something interesting to say about dramatic criticism, about democracy, about Lloyd George and about love. It is one of the most interesting books to pick up and read for a few minutes, that has emanated from the stage in a long time.

§

Weber and Fields is not to be judged by biographic standards. It is not a biography at all. It is a torrid narrative of the triumph of two Jewish boys who, unaided by education, training or influence, went from a cellar in East Broadway to their own theatre on Broadway and who furnished during ten years wholesome amusement to more people of this city and country than any two men of their time, not even excepting William Jennings Bryan and Rev. John Roach Straton. No one could reduce to writing the genius of Weber and Fields. It defies verbal characterisation but Mr. Isman makes an excellent attempt. That he does not quite succeed in conveying how side-splitting were their conversations and antics, is not his fault. But he has succeeded in giving some good pictures of the time, and some excellent likenesses of many who were associated with the two comedians: of De Wolf Hopper as Hoffman Barr; of Lillian Russell as the Wealthy Widow, and of David Warfield as the Talking Doll. No one who knew Peter Dailey will fail to approve this thumb-sketch of him:

"Oh, rare Pete Dailey! Inimitable Peter! Born comedian, the quickest-witted man that ever used grease paint; splendid voice; an acrobat and agile dancer despite his two hundred and fifty pounds; no performance ever the same; needing neither lines nor business, but only to be given the stage; convulsing his fellow actors as well as the audience with his impromptu sallies; an inveterate practical joker; a bounding, bubbling personality."

Things have changed since the heyday of their success! When thugs want your money in New York, nowadays, they knock you down and take it; or if it is jewellery they fancy, they enter your house or shop and blackjack you if you seek to stay their quest. There was more finesse in the good old

days. The man who guessed your weight—"No charge if I fail"—spoke in a code intelligible only to his accomplices. As he ran his hands over a candidate he talked, seemingly to no purpose, but his "I think your weight is," translated, meant, "His money is in his right trousers pocket." "I guess your weight to be" located the victim's purse in the hip pocket, and "I say your weight is" the inside coat pocket.

If Chicago were articulate she would probably deny that she now harbours hostelries such as Joe Weber and Lew Fields were obliged to patronise.

"For the period of the Chicago stay Grenier boarded out his troupers by contract. Joe and Lew were assigned to a boarding house with the freaks. The bearded lady sat at Lew's left and drank her coffee from a moustache cup. The fat man occupied the next three chairs on Joe's right, and never missed the middle one when Joe removed it, as he did at every opportunity. Directly opposite, on a high chair, sat the armless wonder. What that unfortunate lacked in arms, he made up in prehensile cunning of his feet. With these he helped and fed himself, and manipulated knife, fork and spoon as matter of factly as the elephants used their trunks. The bearded lady had a reputation as a wit to uphold and it was her pleasure to shout 'Hands off!' at least once at every meal when the wonder reached for some dish. At the first breakfast Lew asked that the biscuits be passed. They lay nearest the wonder. He thrust forth a leg with a biscuit clutched in his foot. Lew did his own reaching from then on. They ate dinner sometimes at the Palmer House, Chicago's pride, where a jar of stick candy stood beside the catchup bottle and the vinegar cruet in the center of each table, and there were nineteen choices of meats on the seventy-five-cent table d'hôte menu that read like an inventory."

The sun of Weber and Fields stayed in its zenith about five years. Then John Stromberg, their musical genius, died, and it set rapidly; and in the twilight, Hopper, Collier, Bernard, Mitchell and his wife, Bessie Clayton, strayed. Inno-

cent slaughtering of the English language began to jar the ears of those who slaughtered it themselves; the quality of the Metropolis' population changed rapidly; theatres began to spring up like mushrooms after a rain and music-halls made way for Follies. Numbered were the days of the Music Hall, which reserved the character of the Daudet heroine, and re-christened her Sapolio in token of her having consecrated her life to the task of making Paris a spotless town morally—the old Music Hall, where Dailey was Jean Gaussin, unwilling victim of Sapolio's high moral purpose; Warfield, Uncle Cæsaire who ate moth balls to conceal his alcoholic breath; Fields, a comedy servant girl who, ordered to serve the capon en casserole, cooked it in castor oil; Joseph, Fanny Le Grand's perfect little gentleman of a child, became in Weber's hands, a kicking, brawling, tobacco-chewing brat; Harry Morey, now a Hollywood hero, a concierge with an Irish brogue.

And such dialogue! Foolish, oh, yes, but of such is the kingdom of real laughter.

A precious book for a melancholy mood, for an hour of convalescence, or for ten minutes of waiting while your wife makes obeisance to her mirror.

XI

STATESMEN

Woodrow Wilson, by *William Allen White.*
The True Story of Woodrow Wilson, by *David Lawrence.*
Brigham Young, by *M. R. Werner.*
The Life of Abraham Lincoln, by *William E. Barton.*
Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge.
Letters from Theodore Roosevelt to Anne Roosevelt Cowles.

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE has the qualities that fit him to write about Woodrow Wilson entertainingly for his contemporaries, illuminatingly for posterity. He is versatile and perspicacious; he has a sense of humour and he is colossally industrious; he is sensitive and sensible, and has been disciplined in the art of verbal expression, by intuition and experience. He is a man of ideals and ideas; the former are realisable, the latter not persecutory; and he has a tender spot in his heart for the Irish.

Posterity and its spokesmen will render the verdict on Woodrow Wilson that will endure. I do not agree with Mr. White that his place in the history of the world will not be determined by his character. It will be determined by his character, not by his characteristics, just as George Washington's was and just as Abraham Lincoln's was. Nor do I agree that "the relation between character and fame is not of first importance" though I am aware that "many good men live and die unknown." They do, indeed, but many good men have very little character. "Character" and "good" are not synonymous. A "good" man is a man who does not disobey the commandments nor transcend conventions. A

man with "character" frequently does both. Woodrow Wilson did and I have no doubt George Washington did, despite the cherry tree story.

The greatest of all commandments is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." If he had affectionate feeling for Dean West, President Hibben, Senator Lodge and others "too numerous to mention" he successfully concealed it. He was undoubtedly a truthful man, but he said he had written the preface to Dean West's publicity brochure without reading it, and later, when it was shown that he had read it, he said he had written it good-naturedly and offhand, which was again at variance with the truth, for it carefully and lucidly expressed his attitude to the school. He told the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations that he never had seen the secret treaties, though there is documentary evidence to the contrary.

He had character: he was firm, fearless and free, and he had vision. He showed these qualities in Paris. In his vision it was revealed to him that from the sanguinous and agonising travail of the war a child had been born; that it did not resemble its parents; that many called it monster, others Bolshevism; and that it subscribed to none of our rules of bringing-up or behaviour. He saw that it was lusty, growing like the traditional weed, that it threatened to shut out our sunlight and our source. He realised that we must deal with communism, and gradually, day by day, the world is realising it. Woodrow Wilson was "good" enough, but unfortunately for him, for his peace of mind and happiness, he had "characteristics" and they fettered him.

Mr. White bears heavily on Woodrow Wilson's ancestry, too heavily some will think, or too indiscriminatingly.

It may have been the Woodrow in him that told Colonel Harvey that his advocacy of him as a presidential candidate was injuring his prospects and it may have been the Wilson in him that charmed the "bawling mob, hot, red-faced, full of heavy food and too much rebellious liquor" which nominated

him for Governor of New Jersey; but it was Woodrow Wilson that met the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the White House in June 1919, when he made the misstep that lamed him for his remaining mortal days, and dislodged his country from the saddle of world-leader, in which it seemed to be riding a winning race.

Mr. White would have us believe that Woodrow Wilson got his intellect and obstinacy from the Woodrows, his emotions and charm from the Wilsons. What did he get from Ann Adams, his lynx-eyed grandmother whose mouth dropped at the angles and who neither saw nor forgave a daughter after she married beyond her approbation? From her, I suppose, he got the capacity to treat Colonel House, his polar star for the ten years of his fruition, as though he were a Judas, and Joseph Tumulty, who served him with dog-like fidelity and intelligence from the beginning of his political career to its zenith and beyond, as though he were not only mangy but had rabies as well?

The chapter entitled "The Miracle of Heredity" might more appropriately and truthfully be labelled, "Teachings of Heredity Exemplified by the Appearance, Conduct and Career of Woodrow Wilson." The author would have us believe that environment had much to do in conditioning his limitations. He writes:

"If only there could have been in his life some shanty-Irish critic with a penchant for assault and battery, some dear beloved sweetheart to show his notes around the playground, some low-minded friend to fasten upon him the nickname 'four eyes,' calling brutal attention to his spectacles, or some other nickname in thinly veiled obscenity which would reveal a youthful weakness and so make him truckle to the baser nature of his gang that he might remove the black curse of his sobriquet—what a world we should have to-day!"

Alas, that I should disagree again with one who has given me hours of pleasure from which enduring admiration has

developed! Woodrow Wilson would have been the same had he budded in Hoboken, flowered in Montmartre and fructified in Tahiti.

If one can say there is a disappointing chapter in the book it is one entitled "The Development of Youth." The study that will throw a penetrating light on Woodrow Wilson will be one that concerns itself chiefly with the years between 1874 and 1885, from the time he went to Columbia, South Carolina, until he left Johns Hopkins University, where "he was known as a friendly cuss in the American vernacular and never a grind." In his school and college days he met, worked and played with other boys who were destined to become successful Americans. Perhaps there was a fule amongst them taking notes which he will print. If there was, he is the one to unleash the bridegroom "coming forth rejoicing as a strong man to run a race" better than his brother-in-law, Stockton Axson, whom Mr. White quotes.

Woodrow Wilson's presidency of Princeton University has probably never been outlined more accurately and attractively than in the chapters, "The Lecturer Becomes the Administrator" and "Going Through the First Fire." Not only is the chief leading actor sketched by the hand of a master, but there is a Hogarthian vignette of Dean West, and a portrait of Colonel House which is so perfect that I must quote it:

"A man of slight figure, perhaps five feet six in height, of a thin, oval cast of countenance, adorned by a short, grey, stubby moustache over a firm and yet sensitive mouth which in turn is carved above a strong chin. The whole countenance bursts into illumination with beaming, kindly eyes below a rather higher brow than one expects from the remainder of the face; and the voice, when it comes from this gentle, interesting, and intelligent face, is soft and low and modest. A certain almost Oriental modesty, a Chinese self-effacement, abides with the personality of Colonel House. He seems to be in constant and delightful agreement with his auditor. And this delightful agreement, as one knows him, expresses itself

in a thousand ways in an obvious and unmistakable desire to serve. He is never servile, but always serving; gentle without being soft, exceedingly courteous with the most unbending dignity. He is forever punctuating one's sentence with 'that's true, that's true'; and stimulating candour among men, which is the essence of friendship."

Mr. White is an impartial partisan, a pleading judge. These desirable qualities of the biographer are revealed most conspicuously in the narrative of Woodrow Wilson's first great struggle with his most deforming limitation: inability to bear and forbear, to do team work, to play the game according to the rules. No doubt he felt that he had gained a moral victory at Princeton, but the trustees were glad to see him leave.

How he got the nomination for Governor of New Jersey, how he short-circuited the political machine, how he inoculated the Democratic party of his adopted state with liberalism and how, gradually but surely, the immunisation that resulted was felt throughout the country are told most interestingly. The chapters are interspersed with pleasant references to three women who influenced his life: he got understanding, loyalty, indulgence and devotion from Ellen Axson and from Edith Bolling; from Mrs. Peck he got appeasement of his latent hedonism, encouragement of his ambition, justification of his conduct, and praise which was to Woodrow Wilson what manna was to the Children of Israel. She, "of exquisite spiritual prowess and facile charm," is supposed to have enjoyed his confidence to a remarkable degree. Her recently published story does not tend to prove it. Until his letters to her are published, I shall continue to believe he got nothing from her save what I have enumerated.

Woodrow Wilson's nomination and election to the Presidency of this country and the accomplishments of his first administration are passed over rather briefly. All will not agree "that when his four years' work are considered as a whole, when they are viewed retrospectively they may be

seen as the fastest moving four years in our economic and social history."

It was in 1916, when he was renominated by his party without opposition, and re-elected, that President Wilson became a world figure. His dealings with Germany, his restraint in bringing this country into the war, the way in which he developed public opinion to back him up when there was nothing to do save to join up with the Allies, are told with candour and simplicity. Then come the glad and the sad chapters: the President's gestation of the League of Nations plan, and his abortive attempts to deliver himself; his European odyssey; his encounter with the sirens; his shipwreck; the shattering of the raft that he got together to take him before the people when the Republican Senators convinced him they would not accept the treaty; his final illness and his tiresome wait for the ring down of the curtain are told with gratifying impartiality and in satisfactory *résumé*.

The relation of Woodrow Wilson's illness to his great failure: his inability to get his country to accept the League of Nations idea and membership in that product of his brain, has never been properly recognised nor publicly discussed. But it has a definite and a pathetic relation. Mr. White says:

"He brought with him to the White House a stomach pump which he used almost daily and a quart can of some sort of coal-tar product—headache tablets; they were giving him incipient Bright's disease until the White House doctors took hold of him and stopped the tablets. The tinkering with his intestines proved the frailty of the man."

Alas, how frail man is, and how many men and women are frail if "tinkering" with their intestines proves such frailty!

Before he went to the White House and while he was still governor of New Jersey, and possibly even before that, Woodrow Wilson showed distinct symptoms of the disease to which

he finally succumbed: arteriosclerosis. The disease was detected first in his retinal blood vessels by a famous ophthalmologist of this country and he was instructed to a régime which, subscribed to and followed, is adequate frequently to bring about a cessation of the progress of the disease. Perhaps "tinkering" with the intestines does not felicitously or appropriately describe the essential features of that prophylaxis, but if it embraces what is meant by overcoming fermentation and putrefaction in the digestive tract, then "tinkering" is the word to use and it is to be regretted that "White House doctors" were not "tinkers" too.

One day, some one will point out that President Wilson's irascibility, obstinacy, mental inflexibility and emotional inelasticity, which he displayed so frequently, painfully to himself and humiliatingly to his people while in Paris on his second European venture, and here when he took his plan to the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and finally to the people at large, were mainly due to the arteriosclerosis, which at that time had made great inroads on the nutrient channels of the brain. It accentuated his limitations and minimised his possessions. It immobilised him like a hephæstic fetter, and there was no one strong or courageous enough to break the links before the fibre of the web had annealed.

Mr. White's concluding chapter is entitled "The Assessment," and it contains these words with which every one must agree:

"If Fame does not come to him through the conjunction of time and chance working upon the genius of the race to preserve the structure which he previsioned in his hour of trial, Fame will find a man here—a clean, brave, wise, courageous man—ready made for heroic stature."

How unfortunate it is that Mr. White could not have interpolated the adjectives "understanding, kindly, compassionate, loyal!"

In another connection Mr. White says: "And we must not forget that from the bottom of his Irish heart always the motive which most surely moved Woodrow Wilson was the love of his kind." Against this statement I set the following extract from my own writings:

"Woodrow Wilson does not love his fellow-men. He loves them in the abstract, but not in the flesh. He is concerned with their fate, their destiny, their travail en masse, but the predicaments, perplexities and prostrations of the individual or groups of individuals make no appeal to him. He does not refresh his soul by bathing it daily in the milk of human kindness. He says with his lips that he loves his fellow-man, but there is no accompanying emotional glow, none of the somatic or spiritual accompaniments which are the normal ancillæ of love's display. He does not respect his fellow's convictions when they are opposed to his own. He does not value their counsel when it is adverse to his own judgment . . . In contact with people, he gives himself the air of listening in deference, and indeed of being beholden to their judgment and opinion, but in reality it is an artifice which he puts off when he returns to the dispensing centre of the world and of the law just as he puts off his gloves and hat. . . . Woodrow Wilson attempts to mask, with facial urbanity and a smile in verbal contact with people, and with the subjective mood in written contact, another deforming defect of character; namely, his inability to enter into a contest of any sort in which there is a strife, without revealing his obsession to win. When he attempts to play any game, his artificed civility, cordiality, amiability, are so discordant with the real man that they become as offensive as affectations of manner or speech always are, and instead of placating the individual for whom they are manifest, or facilitating the *modus vivendi,* they offend and make *rapport* with him impossible . . . Mr. Wilson is a brilliant, calculating and vindictive man; brilliant in conception, calculating in motive and vindictive in execution. . . . Were he generous, kindly and humble, it would be difficult to find his like in the flesh or in history."

That was my deliberate judgment after having studied Woodrow Wilson from the psychological point of view, and

that is my judgment now after having read and re-read Mr. White's book.

It is by his possessions, not by his limitations, that Woodrow Wilson will be estimated. The campaign is on. It is not a noisy one. No one can say what the outcome will be, but the straw vote now being taken suggests that his election to membership in the Academy of the World's Immortals is assured.

§

Another journalist, David Lawrence, has written what he calls *The True Story of Woodrow Wilson*. Either the adjective should have been deleted from that title, or the indefinite article should have been substituted for the definite.

Mr. Lawrence was the correspondent of the Associated Press at Princeton from 1906 to 1910, the closing years of Wilson's pedagogical life and the opening years of his political career. For the past fifteen years, he has done journalistic work in Washington which has brought him in close contact with the pattern makers of our national destiny. He has had therefore unusual opportunity to observe, and he is a trained and trusted interpreter of events. Small wonder that his book is readable, interesting and instructive. Were he as trustworthy an interpreter of souls as he is of events, his book would deserve high rating.

The satisfactory life of Wilson must be written from his letters, messages, memoranda and books after the disappearance of the emotional states engendered by his presence and personality, which are prejudicial to correct estimation and inimical to sound judgment. Such states of popular feeling never disappear in one generation. It is only now that we begin to realise the majesty of Lincoln's mind, the harmony of his soul.

Mr. Lawrence's opening sentence is "Woodrow Wilson died as he lived—unexplained and unrevealed." He was more

"explained" than any man of his time, and neither Mr. Baruch nor Mr. Bridges would, I fancy, admit that he was unrevealed. He may have been improperly explained, and insufficiently revealed, but there are thousands who saw and met him who will not believe it.

Mr. Lawrence states that his purpose was to put on record a dispassionate narrative of the man who, equipped only with the qualities of personal magnetism and intellectual power, made the unparalleled ascent from College Professor to Moral Leader of the world. Every unprejudiced reader must admit that success crowned his effort.

When Admiral Grayson shall publish his diary; when the archives of Colonel House's mind are accessible; when all Walter Page's letters are available, and when Mr. Robert Bridges, Mr. Norman Davis, and Mr. Bernard Baruch shall testify the qualities that the world denied him—qualities of heart—we shall be in position to estimate Woodrow Wilson and to assess his career. Had Mr. William Jennings Bryan shifted the focus of his mind from fundamentalism to fact, and told us of his intimacy with Woodrow Wilson, it would have served a useful purpose.

§

It was said of Brigham Young that he was a Cromwell in daring, a Machiavelli in intrigue, a Moses in executive force, and a Bonaparte in ruthlessness and unscrupulousness; and William H. Seward said that America has produced few greater statesmen. These testimonials and the universal admission that he gave Mormonism whatever permanency it has, and that he was the parent of its material prosperity prove that he was a man of uncommon personality.

Personality analysis and portrayal are the Elysian field of the biographer. Here is a man who was to the system of polytheism called Mormonism what Paul was to Christianity:

preacher, organiser, administrator. A farmer lad without background or education, he supported himself by painting and glazing until he undertook the dissemination and direction of the doctrines revealed by God to Joseph Smith, Jr., who devoted all the succeeding days of his life, until his neighbours killed him, to their promulgation. Religion took the place of education in Brigham Young and aroused his latent qualities and power. It led him to the Governorship of Utah and to the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and before he died nearly a half a million people were convinced that he, like Christ and Mohammed, partook of divinity.

He has only recently been called to his reward; fifty years ago, he was a power in the land; for more than a quarter of a century every word that he said that was fit to print was printed and archived; his life is thoroughly documented. He should be a fascinating subject for a biographer. It would be fulsome praise to say that M. R. Werner has written a satisfactory or a successful biography of him. It reveals neither diligent research nor careful reflection; it is neither skilfully composed nor effectively told; there is scant evidence in it that the most important source of such a biography, *The Journal of Discourses,* has been deeply studied or adequately transcribed. But its most serious shortcoming as a biography is a possession, not a lack, and that possession is the engulfing, overwhelming background. Mr. Werner says it is impossible to write the life of Brigham Young without also writing the history of Mormonism, and it is impossible to write the history of Mormonism without writing the life of Joseph Smith, Jr. I fancy few will agree with him. I should go so far even as to say that no one can write the history of Mormonism and the lives of its author and proprietor and of its administrator and perpetuator, simultaneously. To do the first of these alone would be an interminable task. It would require a discussion of the religious instinct, explaining why this instinct is so

Reprinted from "Brigham Young," by M. R. Werner
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BRIGHAM YOUNG

rarely appeased by what the wisdom of God and the ingenuity of man have to offer. And a detailed, specific statement of the system of polytheism which the Book of Mormon professes to teach and the Book of Doctrine seeks to justify, would require examination of the status of prophecy, of miracles, of the imminent approach of the end of the world, of personal contact with God through sight or hearing at the present day, of liberty of private judgment in religious matter, and of scores of other tenets of the Mormon creed. Moreover, it would require an explicit statement of the Mormon hierarchy, an extremely complicated structure, and a summary of the Mormon's form of government. No biographer, however facile, could interpret Joseph Smith, Jr., who is not familiar with the psychopathology and experienced in the ways of the psychic deviate. Concerning Mr. Werner's apology regarding the necessary scope of this book, it would be just as legitimate to say that the life of Francis of Assisi could not be written without writing at the same time the history of the Catholic Church and the story of the life of Ignatius Loyola.

In brief, Mr. Werner bit off more than he could chew. However, one gets more from a second reading of the book than from the first. That is a poor recommendation for a book these days when people are insisting that they be enlightened by electricity. By careful and persisting digging, the reader may get a notion, form a concept, of Brigham Young's personality, particularly if he concentrates on the chapter entitled "Sinai."

Brigham Young said with his lips that he believed in God, but with his heart he said he believed in himself. He was self-sufficient, but not self-satisfied.

He was about as fearless as man can be. His conduct all his life testifies that he was as devoid of fear as the words of Edward W. Bok testify that he is. Brigham Young and Theodore Roosevelt had the same brand of courage and about the same supply.

Young understood the primitive and the acquired urges of man as few understand them. He curbed those of others and indulged his own; and he was the only man of his country, save Benjamin Franklin, who really understood women.

He was ruthless, and he had a vein of cruelty in him that came to the surface with increasing frequency. He imposed his will and determination upon friend and foe; he brooked no denial, no contradiction. Cast in the mould of Joshua, he firmly believed every place the sole of his foot trod was his, for the Lord had given it to him.

With it all, he had a sense of humour and he loved children. Small wonder that orators in the throes of self-excitation liken him to Pericles and Cromwell, and frenzied preachers liken him to God.

One has but to study the various photographs of Brigham Young and to keep in mind one thing he said about his father in order to be able satisfactorily to solve the mystery and guess the secret of his personality: "It was a word and a blow with Father, but the blow came first." And Brigham Young's method was the same. He wanted to keep polygamy as the strong link in the chain of the hierarchal organisation that was such a brilliant economical success; he kept it there until the Government imprisoned him, and when he died, seventeen wives and forty-four children were at his funeral.

He had his own way in everything save with Amelia Folsom. To her determination not to bend the knee, he owes the preservation of his character. Another young woman whom he took to wife when he was sixty-six attempted to discipline him, but without success. Even if she had not failed, his character would have been safe; that possession can not be ruined after sixty.

Like Achilles, Brigham Young had one vulnerable spot, but it was his heart, not his heel. Women acted upon him as the lamp does upon the moth. It was not face or figure, intelligence or charm that lured him. It was sex. Casanova

was to him what a candle is to a phare. The illusion that most men develop when they approach senility, viz., that they are still attractive to young women, seized him early. When he was fifty-six years old, he said, preaching to his flock: "You think I am an old man? I could prove to this congregation that I am young, that I could find more girls who would choose me for a husband than any of the young men." His experience would seem to justify the boast, but with all his understanding of women he forgot that women marry for different reasons, some for position, some for protection, some for title. But what is Princess or Duchess compared to Goddess?

"I am a great lover of good women. I understand their nature, the design of their being and their work." Had Brigham Young left out the only adjective in that sentence and added: "Once it mattered not to me that they were old or young, homely or plain, temperamental or indifferent, but now that I am old, I like them young and pretty," it would have been an epitome of what women meant to him in the twilight of his life, as the following sentence epitomises his general estimate of them: "Let our wives be the weaker vessels and the men be men, and show the women by their superior ability that God gives husbands wisdom and ability to lead their wives into His presence." After looking at the pictures of scores and more of Brigham Young's wives, one is convinced that Mark Twain was right when he said the man that marries one of them has done an act of Christian charity which entitled him to the kindly applause of mankind, and the man who marries sixty of them has done a deed of open-hearted generosity so sublime that the nation should stand uncovered in his presence and worship in silence.

The hiatus in Brigham Young's personality was on the æsthetic side. He had no feeling for beauty in any form or display and he could not distinguish between vulgarity and refinement in conduct, thought or speech. Rabelais alone outranks him in putridity of speech, and his sermon of the first

Sunday of September 1861, when he talked to his flock about how they should dress, is offered in evidence.

Shrewdness, cruelty and industry were his dominant possessions. They radiate from the daguerreotype made of him when he was fifty, like scent from a lily. He was hirsute, heavy-jawed, thin-lipped and the corners of a mouth, that seemed framed for an oath or an obscenity, dipped deeply into his cheeks. He was thick-necked, barrel-chested and his hands and feet did not fit him, but they were adapted to a man who ruled with a rod of iron. The secret of his success he said was "I am a Yankee. I guess things and very frequently I guess right." If he had added, "I see straight; I know that original sin is fear and that all mankind is born in it; and that the real pleasure of life is in gratifying the fundamental urges," neither his personality nor his success would be enigmatic.

It would help the searcher after explanation of Brigham Young's success as proselyter, exhorter, guide, executive, lover and tyrant to know about his parents and his brothers and sisters. They were all steeped in seriousness and saturated with religiosity. His father, who became the right-hand man in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was an unreasoning Methodist, an uncompromising moralist. His brother Joseph "was solemn and praying all the time and he had not been seen to smile for four years or to laugh for two." His brother Phinias was a preacher who saw visions and his sister who mediated him to Mormonism was the wife of the Reverend John P. Green. He lived in a recreationless community to which a new religion was what the County Fair, Circus and Cinema are to remote rural communities to-day.

It was as natural for Brigham Young to go into Mormonism as for a duck to go into water. When he got in, he soon found it was a quick and safe way to prosperity, power and posterity. He put his religious enthusiasm out at compound interest and in twelve years it made him a Prophet, a Seer, a Revelator and a Realtor. He pitched his economic tent in the desert plains

of Utah and he directed his co-religionists to thrust fertility upon them through irrigation and bent backs. Having no capacity for spending money, he soon began to experience the feelings of Crœsus. He realised that the surest way to wealth is to be a big earner, a small spender, and a prudent investor. He urged his flock to those ends and said: "I am your avatar."

There were two things he liked to do: to dance and to make love. He was strangely susceptible to rhythmical movement and he loved to marry women and to beget children. He acknowledged twenty-seven of the former and fifty-six of the latter.

The day Mormonism was purged of polygamy, it ceased to be an object of popular interest and likely it will remain so unless the Ku Klux Klan or the Fundamentalists can be persuaded to concentrate on it, when it shall have again its day in court, but there will never be such days as those of Brigham Young.

Mr. Werner says he is convinced that Mormonism is a perfect example of religion carried to its illogical conclusions. If he would only tell us what religion carried to its logical conclusion is, it might help us to fathom his meaning. But nothing will help us understand what he means by "demented frog" and "neurotic horse" or why one of Joseph's sisters was *enceinte* and not pregnant, or what there was about Brigham Young that made him "constitutionally, and by habit, incapable of languor," for languor shall always mean for me feebleness, faintness of body, oppression from fatigue, disease or trouble. Brigham Young was a god, but he was also a mortal.

§

Dr. Barton's reasons for writing another life of Lincoln are three: he has some new facts, he wishes to correct misstatements in extant biographies, and fifty years of clearing weather have added to the visibility and luminosity of the atmosphere

through which the Great Liberator is to be seen. Moreover fifty years is the gestation period of judiciality.

There are few more puerile chapters in biography than Chapter I entitled "The Birth of Abraham Lincoln," with its trivialities and platitudes on the birthplace of eminent men, Christ included; discourses on log cabins, their shape and size and construction; homilies on the comfortlessness of Nancy Lincoln's bed and the relationship of plains and woods to Presidents; reflections on the relationship of child culture to sanitation; the description of Nancy's smile when she was told that she had brought forth a man child; and the astonishing statement that the author has ridden in the Kentucky mountains many miles side by side with a doctor who died soon after 1809. Any one who can get through the first chapter, brief though it is, will be able to read the book.

Abraham Lincoln held biographies in slight esteem and could scarcely be persuaded to read them. He wanted the truth about people. Hence he read the Bible. He would probably have found Dr. Barton's three books about him far too eulogistic, but eulogy comes naturally to clergymen. "This book attempts to tell the truth about Abraham Lincoln." So did Nicolay and Hay's, so did Lord Charnwood's, Miss Tarbell's, Herndon's, Josiah Holland's, and others "too numerous to mention." Dr. Barton has no corner on truth. His new facts are important, but not so important as he thinks. Aside from putting it beyond question that Abraham Lincoln was born to Nancy Hanks while she was wedded to Thomas Lincoln, there is nothing new of importance except perhaps certain emotional sidelights. He has unearthed some documents that bear directly on Lincoln's ancestry, but we are no more interested in his grandfather than in his great-grandfather and in him no more than the grandfather who had eight or eighty grands before his father-appellation. He has had access to the diaries of Orville A. Browning, once United States Senator, but I should not consider his Excellency George Harvey's

diary a repository of facts about Woodrow Wilson. Although Senator Browning was reputed to have known Lincoln intimately, he and Judge David Davis, discussing the Nation's loss the day after Lincoln's death, agreed that no one knew him through and through. Moreover, Mr. Browning was a pious man and piety is a parent of prejudice.

The writer who has new facts about Abraham Lincoln should state them in plain language at the beginning of each chapter. Dr. Barton has written an enormous book, two volumes, 500 pages each, about America's inspired statesman, of which the only interesting portion is that which treats of the parents of Lincoln, and he had already treated that subject in a book entitled *The Paternity of Abraham Lincoln.*

Dr. Barton writes that now for the first time he is able to give the true story of the Hanks family from which our greatest President descended. It has the hall marks of a true story, and henceforth it must be accepted. The investigations that the author has made of the Sparrow family have been fruitful and they should forever close the controversy concerning Lincoln's parentage. The records of Mecklenburg County, Virginia, and of Mercer County, Kentucky, have told Dr. Barton the truth about it. We could wish that he might have told it with more brevity, directness and felicitousness. He is far stronger in research than in narrative power. Digression, circumlocution, overtake him on every page.

Joseph Hanks' eldest daughter was Lucy. She came to young womanhood in a period of license and revolt that followed the Revolutionary War, similar to that which followed the Great War. Dr. Barton thinks this explains, but does not justify her conduct. She bore a child when she was 19 and she called it Nancy. The father has been conjectured, but history does not name him. Seven years later she married, and though she "was behaving like a perfect lady when her father died, he disinherited her." He could not forget her seven years of sin. After she had been indicted for fornication

and branded publicly "with an unpleasant name," Henry Sparrow made his beau geste. He married her and thus vested her with virtue. The indictment was quashed. From that time Lucy was known as Nancy's Aunt. Readers of Edith Wharton's *The Old Maid* will know just how Lucy felt about it. Let us hope that Elizabeth Sparrow, the real aunt, was as good a vicarious mother as Delia Lovell, and let us also hope that some day Mrs. Wharton may write her story.

Discussing the parents of Abraham Lincoln, Dr. Barton takes occasion to say that Lea and Hutchinson's book, *The Ancestry of Abraham Lincoln* is not *always* wrong. That is Dr. Barton's idea of high praise.

Thomas Lincoln married Nancy Hanks and a photograph of the marriage certificate which adorns Dr. Barton's book convinces us that it was a *bona fide* marriage. Whether Nancy's mother was there we are still in doubt. Dr. Barton concludes this chapter with two brief paragraphs:

> "I wonder if she was there."
> "I wonder if she could keep away."

When I read those lines, I found myself murmuring, " I wonder"; and then "I wonder why I wonder." All readers of *The Old Maid* will say "I'll say she was there," and indeed Dr. Barton says so in the fourth chapter, which is devoted to the Hankses and the Sparrows.

Dr. Barton strangles the Mary Shipley myth. The Shipleys now fade out of the Lincoln picture. Abraham Lincoln, the pioneer who went to Kentucky from Virginia, was alleged to have married twice; first in leisure to Bathsheba Herring; then in haste to Mary Shipley. It is not true. Bathsheba was his one and only wife. Everything that has been found out about her is to her credit. Her fourth child, Thomas, was selected by Providence to father him who was to purge the world of slavery. He had no idea that he had been selected,

but had he known, he could not have improved on his selection of Nancy Hanks; from her, Lincoln got his heart and his humour. His other great possession, his capacity to learn by experience, he got from the Bathsheba. The Lincolns only passed on the chromosones, but it is now forever settled that they did that and for it they shall be glorified eternally.

Dr. Barton gives Nancy and Thomas good characters. The former was serious, but emotional, industrious, a good housekeeper and a better mother. The latter was not the shiftless, improvident migratory vacillator that he has been reputed to be, but he liked water better than land. He did not have an uncontrollable urge for work, nor did he starve himself or his family to swell a savings bank account. "He accepted his situation, and when his day's work was done, he rested and visited and took life as comfortably as he was able." To be sure he was evicted from Knob Creek farm, but that was due to a failure which he had in common with many others: foresight inferior to hindsight. Of Abraham Lincoln's childhood at Knob Creek little is known. Dr. Barton indulges in some pleasant conjectures and it is known that the future saviour of the Nation did write verse in his youth. So his biographer may also be right in these surmises.

An illuminating and convincing chapter is entitled "Lincoln's Kentucky," for it shows that the slavery question was brought frequently and dramatically to the plastic mind of Abraham, and it reveals a people of primitive prejudices, of intense antipathies, of violent intolerance, of cowardly superstitions. Abraham Lincoln may have laid the foundation of his fair-mindedness, tolerance, kindliness, sympathy and sanity in those years; built the structure in Indiana and furnished it in Washington. Lincoln was nine years old when his mother died, but he was of a maturer mind than many boys of fourteen. A year later, he was given a stepmother. "She transformed the home of the cheerless widower into a spot of pleasant associations and happy memories." That epitaph should satisfy any step-

mother. Lincoln's schooling is an old story. Retelling it does not improve it. Mrs. Allen Gentry's recollections that were given to Herndon are still the most interesting. It is safe to assume that the world will always be interested in Abraham Lincoln's love affairs, but until the ideas of George Bernard Shaw are accepted and we have acquired, like the French, an acceptable sex language, we shall not be able to appease the interest. Even then the story will have to be told by some one who had limitations and experiences similar to Lincoln's or by some one to whom privileged communications are made—and who is invested with the power of inspiring confidence.

Dr. Barton's treatment of John McNamar, who was the first to fan Ann Rutledge's amatory smouldering fire into flame, will be approved by his readers. John was a poor thing and it is a pity his path ever crossed Ann's. Posterity has aureoled the love of Ann and Abraham and time does not tarnish it, indeed brightens it. The permanency of love is a lost illusion. Even had Ann lived to marry her lover, their love might not have lasted their years. I can think of few subjects that lend themselves to discussion with less grace than "did Abraham Lincoln love Mary Todd when he proposed to her and when he married her?" I do not know—nor do I know any one who does know, but reams have been written about it. I have an opinion, but like so many others it is valueless to any one but myself. If he was in love either with Mary Owens or Mary Todd, he had strange ways of showing it. His love letters to the former, especially those indicating willingness to marry, are masterpieces of frigidity and would put out any heart-fires that were ever ignited; and the person who, reading *any* account of Lincoln's conduct the day set for his marriage with Mary Todd, can say he was in love certainly never has been in love himself nor has he even observed at close range any one in the throes of the divine passion. Whether he "went crazy as a loon" when he bolted the expectant bride, as his friends alleged, or whether his heart failed

him is beside the question. Sane men in love sometimes act as he acted. I doubt if there is a neurologist whose professional experience does not encompass an example of such conduct. It is astonishing the thoughts and convictions that come to sensitive, self-conscious men confronted with the obligation of obeying God's first Command. Partisans of his head may say that he was not in love, of his heart that he was not sane.

He married Mary and his treatment of her indicates that he learned to love her, and no wonder if the account Dr. Barton gives of her is true. His conduct in this respect reflected his common sense and uncommon judgment. If Abraham Lincoln's reputation had depended upon his knowledge of women and his proficiency in the *ars amandi,* it would not have outlasted his days.

Dr. Barton is a fine example of researcher: patient, industrious, indefatigable, determined. Certain investigations led him to frame a hypothesis about the ancestry of Abraham Lincoln. Then he set to work to prove that the assumptions of the hypothesis were facts. He succeeded to an astonishing degree. If Lord Charnwood will now make a few corrections, interpolate a few facts, it will be an almost perfect biography of Abraham Lincoln, and if Miss Tarbell will do the same and make a few deletions as well, it will be on the whole the most readable.

From the time Lincoln was elected President of the United States, he begins to elude his latest biographer, or perhaps it would be more just to say that Dr. Barton does not make his knowledge of Lincoln's later motives and conduct so impressive or so convincing as he does when he writes of the twenty pre- and post-natal years. However the last chapter, most infelicitously entitled "Mr. Lincoln," is a model of catholic taste, commendable restraint and good judgment. Deleted of its last sentence, it would be an ideal summary by a man who makes no claim to being a biologist, psychologist or personality ex-

pert and who is neither biographer nor historian by temperament. Here he pitches his pæan of praise in the right key, and he does not distract the listener with gossipy interpolation or jejune ejaculation.

§

Physicians whose concern it is to estimate and adjudge their fellows' mental balance find frequently that they get more information from the writings of the individual whose sanity is in question than from his speech. It is more self-revelatory especially if it is thrown off in emotional white heat. Theodore Roosevelt was an intensely emotional man and he was the most prolific letter-writer of his time; and perhaps of all time. His biographer, Mr. Joseph B. Bishop, estimated that he wrote during his public career more than 150,000 letters—an average of more than 10 letters a day. It seemed beyond belief when we were first told, but gradually one gathers credulity as volume after volume of his letters are published. "Writing is horribly hard work to me," he wrote in a letter dated March 26th, 1887. He liked hard work. He loved few people and it was essential to his happiness and welfare that, with these few, he should share his emotional states and discuss his intellectual preoccupations. Hence, the number of his letters. His friendship with Henry Cabot Lodge did not date from school or college days. In the Spring of 1884, when he was a member of the New York State Legislature, he was addressing him as "My dear Mr. Lodge"; in the Summer as "My Dear Lodge" and telling him he is one of the very few men he really desires to know as a *friend!* in the Autumn as, "Dear Old Fellow" and assuring him he is the salt of the earth whose people shall one day become cognisant of his savour, and by Winter as "Dear Cabot" and testifying his admiration, affection and spiritual intimacy. A quarter of a century later he wrote "from the Spring of 1884 Cabot Lodge was my clos-

est friend personally, politically, and in every other way, and occupied toward me a relation that no man has ever occupied or ever will occupy." In his entire political career he maintained that he had never formulated a policy or made an appointment without seeking the counsel and guidance of this friend. The letters in the volumes entitled *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge* give ample proof of this friendship and intimacy. Roosevelt poured out his heart and his mind to Lodge and thus furnished us material for estimating the kind of man he was; his conscience, morality, patriotism; his sincerity, affection, hypocrisy; his imagination, intellect, culture; his idealisms and realisms; his body and his soul. Here is first-hand information, awaiting indeed inviting interpretation. Perhaps no one ever better illustrated the fact that basically every mood is the mental transformation of a bodily state than Theodore Roosevelt.

The beginning of any understanding of him must be made in his "stunts": cow-punching, cross-country riding, big game hunting, endurance tests, soldiering, exploring. It is generally known he was a delicate youth and it is alleged he went West seeking invigoration. He went West for the same reason the Sun goes: it was a part of the divine order. Chains could not have thrust inactivity upon him. Physical activity was as fervently in his blood as lust in the blood of a normal man; no one can read his letters from Little Missouri, from Elkhorn Ranch, Dakota, or his account of participation in a fox-hunt with battered head and broken arm, and need further proof of his indomitable energy. He knew minutes of physical peace, but they were thrust upon him by mental activity; he had hours of bodily rest, but they were stolen from his urge that he might display or convey his emotional state. He had to a singular degree the capacity to concentrate all his energies on the job in hand, the task undertaken; to do it and fulfil it with all his might and main, to tolerate no distraction,

to suffer no interruption, to brook no interference. Whether he was playing tennis, orienting the Civil Service Commission, directing the New York Police Department, scorning Mr. E. L. Godkin, organising the Rough Riders, framing the policies and administering the affairs of his country, or reading a book, he did it with all the punch there was in him and when his punch-exchequer got low he sought the services of a trainer. He liked to drink the wine of life with brandy in it, he says in one of these letters, and the brandy he used is now not even outlawed. As Henry Adams says, "Roosevelt more than any other man living within the range of notoriety showed the singular primitive quality that belongs to ultimate matter —the quality that mediæval theology assigned to God—he was pure act."

The next most characteristic feature of Theodore Roosevelt is that he took himself, his beliefs and convictions with great seriousness. Early in life he convinced himself that he had come upon a brand of honesty that he must popularise and persuade his fellow citizens to use. If they would not use it after they had been appraised of its quality and source they were perfect asses like Vilas, malicious and dishonest scoundrels like Godkin, demented mugwumps like John Fiske, dogs like Carl Schurz, hypocrites like George W. Curtis and accessories to the deeds of the German governmental murderers both before and after the facts like Woodrow Wilson. G. W. Smalley's attitude was contemptible, he would like to put the editors of the *Evening Post* and of the *World* in prison. President Eliot made himself ridiculous by his stand on civil service and ballot reform; and it would be a pleasure to shoot or thrash his colleague Parker. Only he and Cabot were right: straight talkers and hard hitters.

Theodore Roosevelt had a keen and profound sense of duty to his country, to his community, to his family and to his friends and he had a superhuman facility for conveying recognition of it to every one who saw him or heard him. To

that and to his reputation for fearlessness he owed a popularity which has never been equalled in this country. He was the embodiment of the American ideal: fearless, impetuous, resourceful, self-confident, ready to throw his hat into any ring and to follow it up with a smile on his face and the exclamation, "This is bully," escaping from his lips. He could inoculate his fellow citizens with his ideas more quickly than any man of his time and he could galvanise them into greater activity and more sustained determination than any President we have ever had. His qualities may outlive the children of those who knew him. One of the astonishing confessions of these letters is that he had few friends and fewer intimates. I have had friends who were convinced they knew him fundamentally and were in close communion with his thought and determination. From their conversation I could readily believe that he rarely made decisions without consulting them. Their names are not even mentioned in his correspondence.

Any one who has been inclined to doubt Roosevelt's sincerity, *i.e.*, to consider that he sometimes affected an enthusiasm which he did not feel, will have his doubts appeased by reading this correspondence. He believed in himself but he was not vain; he rated his abilities high, but his conduct displayed no arrogance; he valued his mental and physical possessions, but he was not proud. If he ever doubted his ability to do any job that presented itself, his most intimate correspondence does not betray it. What he doubted was that the opportunity would not be vouchsafed him.

The man to whom these letters were written was vain. It flattered his vanity that he had seen Theodore Roosevelt on the road to the White House while he was Police Commissioner, and that he had told him so with assurance; thus discharging in advance the obligation he was to incur by receiving such evidences of trust as the letters betray from so great a man as Roosevelt. He saw his own thoughts disseminated and his convictions popularised by his friend who knew how to

gauge the feeling of the people and to raise their temperature; and in some inexplicable way there steals upon the reader a thought that when Lodge made up his mind that Roosevelt was going to the top he also made up his mind that he would link his name with that of the rising star in a correspondence that the world would not let perish.

Roosevelt was a many-sided man. He was gifted with foresight and hindsight. There has never been a President save Lincoln who had such capacity for learning by experience. For a man so emotional, he was a good judge of men and he could do team work. These qualities distinguished him from the man upon whose head he poured the vials of his wrath the last few years of his life and who may get from posterity both the laurel and the oak-leaf crowns. Scores of instances could be cited from this correspondence in support of his power to size up men, but none serves better than his letter to John Hay urging him to persuade the President to appoint General Wood to the command of all Cuba. "Wood is a born diplomat, just as he is a born soldier. I question if any nation in the world has now or has had within recent times any one so nearly approaching the ideal of a military administrator of the kind now required in Cuba." No recorded prophecy has ever come truer than that.

Roosevelt was not a modest man, but he had a sense of propriety and fitness that was very becoming. His letters to Lodge about the hesitation on the part of the War Department to recognise his military service in Cuba by giving him the Medal of Honour, are dignified and straightforward. There is no pumped up humility. He did a good job and the labourer is worthy of his hire. In the same way his letters, when he was being groomed for the nomination of running mate to McKinley, are full of good sense and sound reasoning. He is satisfied with what he has accomplished as Governor of New York, and so were the people. What he would really like, would be to be re-elected Governor with a first-

class Lieutenant-Governor, and then be offered the Secretaryship of War for four years. He knew what he wanted, and he got it, the Presidency, but the letter that describes his visit to Buffalo after McKinley had been shot should be ample testimony to convince any one that he did not want it the way it came. Any one keen to learn the tricks of the political game will be aided by perusal of the letters written from the New York State Capital. They may also observe how statesmen develop. Roosevelt's letters from the White House are just as frank, intimate and revealing as were those from New York Police Headquarters and from Albany: full of praise for Lodge's potential and actual accomplishments; of proffered suggestions and requests for counsel; of enthusiasm about exhausting rides and the fording of turbulent streams, "altogether it was great" or "bully fun," full of vigorous comment and of plain characterisation of men. Discussion of literary matters which was so conspicuous in the early letters has now practically disappeared, though occasionally he makes brief comment when relating his diversions. In September, 1903, he writes, "I have been reading Aristotle's politics and Plutarch's miscellany and as usual take an immense comfort out of the speeches of Lincoln." It is extraordinary how his partisanship determined his likes and dislikes even in literary matters. "The more I study Jefferson the more profoundly I distrust him and his influence." Lodge writes to him on returning the proof of his first inaugural address, "Literary form is after all the salt that keeps alive the savour of the thoughts we would not willingly have die." Indeed his "form" had improved enormously since he wrote the life of Thomas H. Benton in 1887, when he stated "my style is very rough and I do not like a certain lack of *sequitur* that I do not seem able to get rid of." That sentence alone is proof of the first allegation, but he bettered it before he reached the White House, and the lack of *sequitur* disappeared forever.

Though his letters to Lodge are chiefly concerned with his

political activities, realisations and prospects; with justification of his conduct, refutation of the allegations of their opponents, and comment on their sinister motives and malign trends—there is much sentiment in them and not a little play. Commenting on something Lodge wrote about the death of John Hay, he says: "It should not make us melancholy. He died within a very few years of the period when death comes to us all as a certainty, and I should esteem any man happy who lived till sixty-five as John Hay has lived, who saw his children marry, his grandchildren born, who was happy in his home life, who wrote his name clearly in the records of our times, who rendered great and durable services to the Nation, both as statesman and writer, who held high public positions, and died in the harness at the zenith of his fame. When it comes our turn to go out into the blackness, I only hope the circumstances will be as favourable." His hope was realised, save that he was four years younger when his turn came to go.

There are many high spots in the correspondence that reveal Roosevelt's character; one of them is his appointments to ministerial and ambassadorial positions and the comments on the appointees; they are all scratch men; he never nominates a man with a handicap and he submits the name first to his friend. Another is the genesis of the thought that led to his bringing Japan and Russia to the council table at Portsmouth, the development and maturity of it, and its success. A third is his break with Lodge that came when he decided to seek the nomination of the Republican Party, and when that was shown to be not available to the Progressive Party—his own creation. Lodge's political conduct in the last ten years of his life alienated many admirers, but it is in a measure offset by his conduct in the trying year of 1912. He was opposed to the constitutional changes advocated by Roosevelt, therefore he could not support him; "but as for going against you that I can not do. There is very little of the Roman in

me for those I love best." There was a lot in him for those he did not love! Finally the student of political events misses the inside story of the Progressive Party. It is likely there is a series of letters to some one else on that subject.

Another thing that he misses is an explanation of his break with Taft. There is a strange and inexplicable absence of any illuminating reference to it in these letters, the place where it should be. Unquestionably our Chief Justice has hundreds of Roosevelt's letters which will one day be published. Until then we must curb our curiosity; but there has been something in Taft's conduct since he became ex-President and in his speeches, that leads one to believe that, when the facts are submitted to the public, it will be seen that he was not responsible for the break or for the hard feeling it engendered.

Some day also the President of Columbia University, who was once a "bully fellow," will publish the scores, perhaps hundreds, of letters he received and they will throw a revealing light on Roosevelt's loyalty. Mr. Bishop in a recent book, *Notes and Anecdotes of Many Years,* has given some personal recollections of him and his humanness which are illuminating.

If one asks men conversant with public affairs of the past thirty years, "What specifically did Roosevelt do while President that entitles him to be classed with the Immortals?" they find it very difficult to be specific in their responses. They will mention the taking of Panama and the organisation of the Commission to construct the Panama Canal, his interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine when Germany was pressing her claims on Venezuela, his vigorous enforcement of the Sherman anti-trust law, and the Peace Conference at Portsmouth. These were most creditable accomplishments, but scarcely epoch-making. It was a beautiful gesture to bring Japan and Russia to the Council table, but it takes from the glamour to know that the suggestion came from the Japanese. And the breaking up of interlocking directorates, the unloosening of

the hold of corporate influences on the government, required courage, judgment and self-reliance; but the historian of the future will be puzzled when he reads that Congress was insisting in 1924 that the railroads should do what they were prosecuted for doing twenty years before. Victory in the Northern securities case may prove finally to be the equivalent of defeat.

Theodore Roosevelt was essentially a great actor, but he wrote his own lines and submitted them to Cabot Lodge for deletion, addition and correction. Stunts of every kind appealed to him. He had a natural talent for accomplishing them which was enormously enhanced by practice. He got away with nearly everything he undertook. Had he given permanency to the Progressive Party, history would credit him with few failures. He knew how to make acquaintances feel that they were friends, and friends that they were loved.

Taken all in all, the features of his personality that attract me most are those revealed in the letters published by Mr. Bishop in the volume called *Theodore Roosevelt and His Time,* in the letters to his children and in the letters to Anne Roosevelt Cowles. This is possibly because he does not there reveal so much bitterness, so much contempt, it must indeed be said, so much hatred, as he reveals in the last letters to his dearest friend: hatred of his successor in the Presidency. Possibly the word "hatred" is not the right one. He despised Wilson, he commiserated the country that was obliged to suffer him, it was a disgrace to continue him in office; he knew less about the conduct of War than he knew about anything, and he knew nothing save academics. Wilson could do no right. But he did one thing which took the check-rein off Roosevelt's inhibitions. He ignored him; he took no heed of his counsels, his detractions, his desires.

Roosevelt was just as sincere in this belief as he was in others, and he had a legion of sympathisers and supporters, at the head of which stood the man to whom the letters were ad-

dressed. Every one is entitled to, and has, his own opinion of the merits of the two Presidents as men and statesmen. Those to whom the one appeals are repelled by the other; but every one will agree that one was more lovable than the other; that he understood the heart of man and that he had one himself. Theodore Roosevelt was one of Nature's wonders and he should take a place among the great Presidents because of what he was rather than what he did.

It must be admitted that the Roosevelt-Lodge letters leave a taste—not quite bitter, not quite acrid, but slightly disagreeable. It can be removed quickly by reading for a few minutes the volume entitled *Letters from Theodore Roosevelt to Anne Roosevelt Cowles*. Here he is revealed as the affectionate brother, the indulgent father, the sympathetic friend of children, especially those of Roosevelt blood. Loyalty to his family and confidence in himself radiate from most of the letters. Fancy a civilian of thirty writing, " 'La Guerre et La Paix,' like all Tolstoi's works, is very strong and very interesting. The descriptions of the battles are excellent, but though with one or two good ideas underneath them, the criticisms of commanders, and of wars in general are absurd."

On the eve of declaration of war with Spain, when McKinley seemed bent on peace, he wrote: "I'd give all I'm worth to be just two days in supreme command . . . I'd have things going so nobody could stop them." And that was what Theodore Roosevelt always wanted to do, to get things going so that nobody could stop them.

He always wanted to start something. He never disclaimed the children of his brain; they were all legitimate. He never mistrusted the potency of his brawn, it never failed him. Courage, self-confidence, self-belief, facilitated the conviction that he was a man of destiny. Though he was not such actually, he scaled the flaming ramparts of the world more gracefully and successfully than any man of his time.

I have never been able to convince myself that Southey was

right when he said, "A man's character can more surely be judged by the letters his friends address to him than by those he pens himself, for they are apt to reveal with unconscious faithfulness the regard held for him by those who knew him best." If Theodore Roosevelt's character were estimated from Cabot Lodge's letters one would have to call him a god, not a man—a god who nodded once, in 1912.

XII

EDUCATORS

THE LIFE OF SIR WILLIAM OSLER, by *Harvey Cushing.*
LIFE AND CONFESSIONS OF A PSYCHOLOGIST, by *G. Stanley Hall.*

SIR WILLIAM OSLER occupied a unique position; he was the most widely known and best beloved physician in the world. He made an indelible impression on the teaching and practice of medicine in three countries—Canada, the United States and England. He lived the number of years allotted to man by the psalmist, and each succeeding year of his life he added to his mental stature by taking thought, and to his emotional profundity by doing deeds of kindliness.

He was the son of an Anglo-Saxon pioneer parson, Featherstone Lake Osler, and of Ellen Free Pickton, a Celt who went from Cornwall to the Province of Ontario in 1837. His spiritual parents were Hermes and Minerva, and he had three godfathers—a parson, Arthur Johnson; a physician, James Bovell, and a professor, Robert Palmer Howard—to them he dedicated the most widely read textbook on the practice of medicine ever written.

He had a genius for friendship that was nearly unique; he had a capacity for quick and accurate observation which is not vouchsafed to one man in a thousand; he had a prehensile mind to which synthesis and logic appealed; he had a liking and a capacity for work that resembled those of Theodore Roosevelt; he had an inborn understanding of humanity; and he loved his fellows. When they were ill, he added great tenderness to his love. He was playful, prankful and guileless, with the face of a sphinx and the expression of an ascetic.

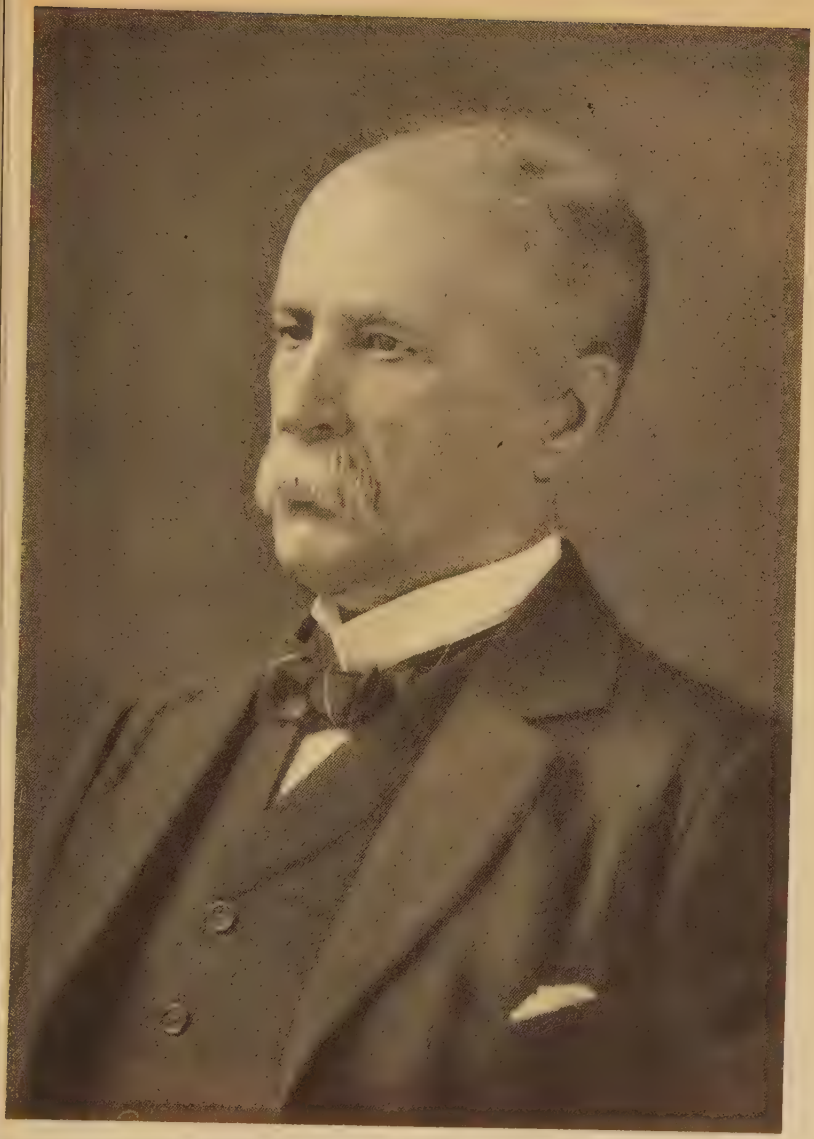
He was a scholar without pedantry, a scientist without pretension, a wit without venom, a humanist without scorn. Small wonder that he was the man without an enemy.

One of his most beloved friends and esteemed colleagues has written his biography and at the same time achieved one of the most difficult of all tasks: he has kept himself out of the book and refrained from eulogising the subject. There are many biographies of physicians that merit the designation "great"; among them, Henry Morley's *Life of Jerome Cardan,* René Valléry-Radot's *Vie de Pasteur,* Stephen Paget's *Life of Victor Horsley,* Agnes Repplier's *Life of William White* and to the list must be added Harvey Cushing's *Life of William Osler.*

Osler did three great things for medicine: he conceived and effected bedside teaching; he demonstrated the value of history as a pedagogical agency and of culture as a humanising one, and he succeeded in making the medical world heed that cure meant prevention. He had but one fundamental dislike: chauvinism; one abiding disdain: insincerity; one supreme contempt: pretence. He could not abide a faker, unless he were feeble minded; then pity facilitated tolerance.

On his seventieth birthday his former pupils and intimate colleagues of this country sent to Oxford two memorial volumes made up of contributions to the science and art that he had fostered and developed. Replying to his fellow Regius professor of medicine in Cambridge, who made the presentation, he said:

"Among multiple acknowledgment I can lift one hand to heaven that I was born of honest parents, that modesty, humility, patience and veracity lay in the same egg, and came into the world with me. To have had a happy home in which unselfishness reigned, parents whose self-sacrifice remains a blessed memory, brothers and sisters helpful far beyond the usual measure—all these make a picture delightful to look back upon. Then to have had the benediction of friendship follow one like a shadow, to have always had the sense of comradeship in work, without the petty pinpricks of jealousies and



SIR WILLIAM OSLER

Reprinted from "The Annals of Medical History"

controversies, to be able to rehearse in the sessions of sweet, silent thought the experiences of long years without a single bitter memory—to have and to do all this fills the heart with gratitude. That three transplantations have been borne successfully is a witness to the brotherly care with which you have tended me. Loving our profession, and believing ardently in its future, I have been content to live in and for it. A moving ambition to become a good teacher and a sound clinician was fostered by opportunities of an exceptional character, and any success I may have attained must be attributed in large part to the unceasing kindness of colleagues and to a long series of devoted pupils whose success in life is my special pride."

There is the man, modest, grateful, appreciative. He attributes his material success to what others have done for him; his spiritual to his inheritancy. Had he added that, early in life, he had a vision and had striven heroically and worked laboriously to make it concrete for the benefit of mankind, and that extraordinary success had attended his efforts, he would have explained William Osler and his career.

What more need be said of his parents? They struggled successfully with the virgin soil in a primitive civilisation; the father ornamented his profession, and the mother fulfilled bounteously her destiny; she mothered eight children, four of whom became famous. The youngest, the subject of this biography, was in nowise remarkable as a child or boy:

"I started in life with just an ordinary everyday stock of brains. In my schooldays I was much more bent upon mischief than upon books, but as soon as I got interested in medicine I had only a single idea: to do the day's work that was before me just as faithfully and honestly and energetically as was in my power."

And this he did to the day of his death.

He was steered into medicine by a strange mixture of scientific and pietistic ardour, James Bovell, and he studied and

graduated at McGill Medical School, then a proprietary institution at the head of which was R. Palmer Howard, who by possessions and conduct influenced Osler's life, for he said of him thirty-five years later: "I have never known one in whom was more happily combined a stern sense of duty with the mental freshness of youth."

Osler went abroad and while increasing his knowledge of medicine laid the foundation of friendships and intimacies which years later, after he had become a famous teacher, facilitated a call to one of the most ornamental professorships in Great Britain. At twenty-eight he had a chair in his alma mater. In ten years he went to the top. Then began that series of calls to colleges and universities here and abroad which did not cease so long as he lived. He refused them all save those of the University of Pennsylvania and Johns Hopkins. In the former he stayed five years; in the latter fifteen. The temptation to respond favourably to the call from New York was very great, and greater still that from Edinburgh. But temptation for Osler was created to be resisted and there was a star that guided him as it guided the Wise Men of the East; he had but to follow it at night, and to be counselled during the day by the voice that once had counselled Socrates to reach his goal, viz., a true knowledge of himself and of his relations to his fellows, and, having reached it, to plant there his banner bearing the masterword in medicine: work. And he worked industriously, honestly, patiently, persistently.

Then came the call to Oxford. He had been in the harness actively for thirty years and the load had begun to drag; the burdens that he had not only willingly borne, but sought, had begun to bend him, and the unfinished literary material of many years clamoured for academic leisure and favourable environment. Oxford was the place and Osler was the very man! Going for good meant farewells, and out of one of them flowed a stream of notoriety which, for a time, threatened to drown him. He took leave of his students, colleagues

and trustees in an address in which he discussed many problems of university life; particularly the danger of staying too long in one place, and the danger of not thrusting opportunities and responsibilities upon young men—and at this point he inadvertently remarked that he was not sure whether it was Anthony Trollope who suggested that there should be a college into which men of sixty retired for a year's contemplation before a peaceful departure by chloroform, but there was much to be said in favour of it. The journalese rendering of this was "Osler recommends chloroform at sixty." The storm gathered during the night. It broke in the East the following morning and by the evening it had spread throughout the country.

Every man and woman above sixty, or approaching it, would seem to have been affronted. Following the acrimonious discussions of the newspapers and the caustic cartoons, came the studied magazine articles proving that Enoch not only begot Methuselah after he was sixty, but walked with God; that Edison was in the heyday of his inventive activity; that Ford would practicalise flying after the chloroform age and that Clemenceau would save the world for democracy, perhaps for socialism. For a short time it looked as if the man without an enemy had lost his distinction. Again, his inner voice counselled him wisely. He did not attempt to explain; he could not be persuaded to refute the alleged statement. He had said the truth, and the truth sufficed William Osler to the end.

Of the many extraordinary things in Dr. Cushing's adequate and appealing biography, none is more arresting than the account given of the birth of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research and the part that Osler unconsciously played in it through his textbook. A young man who had access to the ear and the purse of John D. Rockefeller read it and was appraised of the fertile field awaiting planting by preventive medicine. The crops that have been harvested have been enor-

mous, but they are as naught compared with those about to be garnered. How little it is generally appreciated that the colossal success of the Panama Canal was due as much to Gorgas as to Bunau-Varilla, and that Osler mediated his appointment to the Commission, and still less is known of the leading part Osler played in decapitating the gorgon typhoid fever in this country thirty years ago.

In England, Osler added to his cultural fame. He was made president of the Bibliographical Society, of the Ashmolean Society and, to cap them all, of the Classical Association, an honour which probably pleased him as much or more than any that had ever come to him. His address of acceptance, which embodied the whole spirit of his ideal, cost him the greatest labour of his life.

He found great joy in England, but he found also his greatest sorrow, for his son, a singular combination of his mother's suaviter and his father's fortiter was killed in the war. It did not kill Osler, it only killed his desire to live. Like his master, Sir Thomas Browne, he knew that oblivion is not to be hired and that the night of time suppresseth the day. He had lived every moment of his day, and every hour had been joyous save one, and he had never stopped to compute his felicities. He died as he had lived, like a marathon runner taking the hurdle.

Dr. Cushing's biography is documented and detailed. It is the kind of biography of Osler that should exist, but there should be another made from it: the story of his life and the charm of his personality in narrative form followed by interpretation, characterisation and estimation. The present one will be received gratefully by his former pupils and colleagues, by his connections and associates, and by libraries; but the general reader, the one who wants to find out without reading hundreds of letters and without wading through 1,500 pages, what Osler was like, how he acquired primacy of the medical world, how he made himself a savant in literature while climb-

ing to the top of his own profession, will seek a book where these are told informatively and entertainingly.

Such a biography of William Osler is bound to come in time. I venture to say that, when it does come, it will dwell at far greater length on the first half of his life. Those who knew Osler intimately will be astonished to find scant reference in Dr. Cushing's book to the interesting Francis family, with whom he lived for so many years in Montreal, or to Nancy Astor, to whom he was legal guardian. There is almost no allusion to the playful side of his nature. To make a man into a saint, though he deserves it, does not always do him justice. William Osler had extraordinarily great qualities, but he was passionate in his likes and dislikes; he was often indiscreet, sometimes tactless to an unbelievable degree; he could not and would not suffer fools; and he exacted unqualified devotion, while preserving the freedom to go his own way. He loved practical jokes, but he was not at all happy when they were played on him. For all this, his feet were less of clay than those of most men. One of the great charms of Osler was that he was so human, and had so much love and understanding of humanity. It is as a man that his friends remember him, and it is as man and teacher that he shall be known to posterity.

§

Thirty-five years ago a Yankee wagonmaker, who had gone to California as a "forty-niner" and piled up a fortune, thought to immortalise his name by founding a university in Worcester, Massachusetts. This University should be a beacon light to other educational institutions, the object of their emulation and envy. Realising that he was lacking concrete pedagogical ideas, that he was devoid of, even antipathic to the principles of organisation and co-operation, and, at least, suspicious of his prejudices, Jonas Gilman Clark was per-

suaded by his counsellor and friend, the late Senator Hoar, to ask a young professor of psychology at Johns Hopkins University, a froward, self-confident, energetic man of promise, to plan and steer his venture. In the book which he called *Life and Confessions of a Psychologist* G. Stanley Hall tells us how he did it, and how his forebears and parents, his education and environment, permitted him to do it.

The story is an interesting one, and besides revealing the personality of Dr. Hall, as it was meant to do, no doubt that he might better understand himself, it throws a light upon the road that education has travelled in this country the past third of a century, a light that is illuminating though not dazzling. Stanley Hall often filled the lamp that generated it, and he swung the reflector with great skill. It is possible that the coming generation will say that he was the soundest psychologist of his time and that he broke more virgin soil than William James. He was an important and tireless worker in the field of pedagogy and he was extremely articulate. When he had passed his seventieth birthday he believed he would yet do "a few things which shall be better than I have ever yet been able to do." He was one of those countless old men who go about repeating "I feel just as I did when I was forty." It was not vouchsafed him to do any of them. Dr. Hall prided himself on being a straight, hard hitter. It pleased him enormously to be called *"l'enfant terrible"* of psychology. He had not always been able to speak out what had been in his mind, so he determined to do it in his book. There will be much diversity of opinion as to whether his reputation shall profit by his frankness.

Solomon was unquestionably right about many things, but Dr. Hall does not agree with him that humility should go before honour. "In the view I have attained of man, his place in nature, his origin and destiny, I believe I have become a riper product of the present stage of civilisation than most of my contemporaries; have outgrown more superstitions, at-

tained clearer insights, and have a deeper sense of peace within myself. I love but perhaps still more pity, mankind, groping and stumbling, often slipping backward along the upward path, which I believe I see just as clearly as Jesus, or Buddha did."

Though not for a moment would I appear to be either a champion of the use of the word "some" as an adjective, or an habitual user of it, I maintain that this is *some* statement. And why leave out Mohammed? Most of us, subject to hours and days of self-depreciation, inadequacy, unworthiness, will envy the self-satisfaction and self-complacency of this retired pedagogue. But in reality it does not suffice him: "As I advance in years there are few things I crave more, and feel more keenly the lack of, than companionship." Even review of successes and contemplation of accomplishments do not shut out loneliness. There is no record that Jesus or Buddha was lonely.

From his earliest days Dr. Hall had what the Freudians call an inferiority complex. His childish self-consciousness, his juvenile aloofness, his mature bumptiousness, his senescent strenuousness all testify it. He became aware of it early in life and strove hard to overcome it. But like the fetters of Hephæstus it could neither be snapped nor loosened. Like them, its substance was as subtle as spider's web and so cunningly contrived that none might see it even of the blessed gods. The statement quoted above may be construed as a last effort to extricate himself from the crafty net.

Dr. Hall was an ardent Freudian. "Nothing since Aristotle's categories has gone deeper, or in my opinion is destined to have such far-reaching influence and results," was the characteristic way he estimated the Freudian mechanisms. It mattered nothing to him that psychoanalysis and the study of the unconscious have made small appeal to the majority of trained psychologists of this or any other country. He attributed this to the prudish reluctance of his colleagues to face the mo-

mentous problems of sex life. They deny it; at least, his successor at Johns Hopkins, the professor at Columbia, the successor to William James at Harvard, and many others do. But the momentous problems of sex life did not balk Dr. Hall. He confessed to "a love for glimpsing at first hand the raw side of human life," and he records the unique thrill he experienced at the numerous prize fights that he attended "unknown and away from home." Moreover the seamy side of life seemed to him as valuable in some respects as the psychological laboratory. "In many American and especially in foreign cities, Paris, where vice was most sophisticated, London, where it was coarsest, Vienna, which I thought the worst of all, I found, generally through hotel clerks, a guide to take me through the underworld by night to catch its psychological flavour." Some reader, low-minded and altogether contemptible, will be base enough to believe that there were other motives. It is a dangerous business anyway. Even Dr. Hall says he had a narrow escape once—his life, not his morals—in a den of Apaches in Paris. About the year Dr. Hall was called to Clark University, a clergyman in New York and a pious vice hunter visited such places and their motives for doing so were publicly questioned. The clergyman stood the shock, but his reforming friend went off his head. The reformatory urge, though not a fundamental one, often needs to be curbed, especially when it is entangled with a lust of curiosity.

Dr. Hall always had a weakness for new, bizarre, hybrid words, and he found difficulty in giving adequate vent to his emotions and cognitions in one language. Therefore one is not astonished to find the present volume constellated with French, German, and Latin words and phrases. He frequently speaks of his *éclaircissements*. He had various kinds: religious, social, political, economic, and even ethical. He has been very fond of giving *aperçus,* of being irreverent to the *ipsissima verba;* and he can never quite forget the *hegira* from

Clark University after the visit of a certain Harper; he still hears the echo of the *vox clamantis in deserto;* and he will talk of the *vita sexualis*. It is to be presumed that any one lured by an autobiography of one of our leading educators will be able to translate these words. At any rate he is not likely to have any more trouble with them than he is with some of the sentences in English. For instance, the Professor, speaking of the necessity of educating the will and the heart as well as the intellect, says:

"Nothing else can save us and I shall live, and hope to die when my time comes, convinced that this goal is not only not unattainable, but that we are, on the whole, with however many and widespread regressions, making progress, surely if slowly and in the right directions."

And again when saying a good word for the "seminary":

"The rabulist, the sophist, the debater, the man of saturated orthodoxy, the literalist, and the dullard will all be held in check if the seminary is rightly pervaded with the phenomena of altitude."

Yes, indeed, but what will save the bromide, the smart Aleck, the hard-shelled—that's the question. Is there any phenomenon or altitude that will accomplish that?

I have always understood it was Worcester, not Webster, who said: "It is I who am surprised; you are astonished," when he returned home and saw his mother-in-law being kissed by the butler. I must have been mistaken, for Dr. Hall says that he was surprised and delighted when he got an invitation, after some lean years as a tutor, to deliver a course of lectures in Baltimore. The sensation of the butler and of Dr. Hall must have been the same, only on the reverse side of the shield.

Dr. Hall wrote this book to find out more about himself than he knew before. I hope he was successful. I know more

about him than I did before, though I have been fairly familiar with his life in the open the past quarter of a century. He says many interesting things about himself. With some of them I find it hard to agree: for instance that he was a mixture of masochistic and sadistic impulses. It may be so, but they were not fifty fifty. One predominated.

Somewhere in the *Tale of a Tub* Swift says that happiness is a perpetual possession of being well deceived. Were it true, the writer of this autobiography rarely experienced happiness save perhaps in Berlin, where he learned "how great an enlightener love is, and what a spring of mind Eros can be."

XIII

PRIZE FIGHTERS

JOHN L. SULLIVAN, by *R. F. Dibble.*
THE ROAR OF THE CROWD, by *James J. Corbett.*

THE most diverting biography of the year is that of John L. Sullivan, the man who shared with Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson the widest popularity of all Americans of their times. Mr. R. F. Dibble does not tell us so much about John L. as a personality, but what he tells of him as a pugilist and drunkard is amusing and amazing, inspiring and instructive. John L. Sullivan and Jean de Reszke were the two artists on whom America concentrated its attention during the closing years of the nineteenth century. They had no superiors or peers until Mr. Corbett and Sig. Caruso came along and dislodged them, the one aided by alcohol, the other by *anni domini.* Their contemporaries will always believe they had no equals and should posterity perpetuate that belief, perhaps it will not be far wrong. If the anti-alcohol league needed a tract to further its cause—but now that it has the law, it does not need it—one could be made from Mr. Dibble's book. Never was the downfall of a great figure so directly traceable to rum as John L. Sullivan's and there are few more striking examples of the efficacity of grace than that furnished by his abstinence and reform. Regrettably that saving visitation did not come to him until alcohol had wrought his ruin physically, and in a smaller measure spiritually.

John L. Sullivan was the greatest pugilist of his time—perhaps of all times. He has been called a brute, but he was not, because he had a sense of humour; he has been called a moron, but he did not deserve it because he refused to run for Con-

gress; it has been alleged that he was tough, but his reverence for the ideal of womanhood contradicted the slander. He was a strange combination: proud that he was Irish and fearful lest people should not know that he was a Bostonian. He had the same reverence for the city of his birth that his biographer has, and his sincerity was less doubtful; for it will occur to some that Mr. Dibble had his tongue in his cheek when he penned this sentence: "And this Boston, the Hub of the Universe, the source of everything excellent in American manners and customs, the originator of all moral and literary endeavours, became unwittingly, but most appropriately, the cradle of modern pugilism." Most Bostonians are likely to find "Hub of the Universe" somewhat intemperate and will think that he should have said hub of the U. S. A. In any event, they were proud of John L. Sullivan, justly so, for as his friend Theodore Roosevelt said: "Old John has many excellent qualities, including a high degree of self-respect . . . he never threw a fight . . . he has been the most effective temperance lecturer I have ever known of," and he might have added that he possessed supremely a quality that all men are one in admiring: courage.

Some of Mr. Dibble's descriptions of the champion's early battles are nearly as thrilling as movie reels; some of the narrative of chance encounters, such as with the bully of Mount Clemens, are most picturesque; and occasionally quotations of the master's own words give spice and substance to the descriptions: "The longest scrap I ever had went about twenty minutes, and that fellow was on the floor most of the time. I was never learned to box. I learned myself from watching other boxers. My style of boxing is perfectly oracular—no, I mean original—with me." As all devotees of the art of self-defence know, John L.'s first great fight was with Paddy Ryan and what Mr. Dibble has to say about it is interesting, particularly the part about Ryan's explanation of his defeat. "The defeated champion burst into print with a series of state-

ments which insisted that his rupture and his truss had so crippled him that he was unable to fight with his customary ferocity." If Dr. John A. Bodine, one time surgeon in New York, were still alive, he would be able to say that a similar statement would be true if Sullivan had made it about his bout with Corbett. There can be little doubt, I believe, that Sullivan's trainers made him enter that contest without a truss. And though alcohol had conditioned the weakness of the abdominal muscles which promoted the hernia, the immediate cause of the champion's fall was due to a condition that should have been remedied surgically.

Now that the technique of the art known as self-defence has become elaborate and complicated, it is interesting to hear what it was for the champion of champions: "His technique was simplicity itself: he merely kept hammering with ruthless atavistic ferocity at his opponents until the opponents became insensible." In view of the legend, current for a while at least, that John L. had first learned to fight by whipping his father, "atavistic" does not seem to be particularly a felicitous adjective. It is a small matter, but Mr. Dibble is not perhaps as careful of his adjectives as an Instructor in the Department of English in the University of Columbia should be. Laborious search would have provided a more appropriate epithet than "cutest" for Charlie Mitchell.

It is sincerely to be hoped that some of John L.'s retorts and remarks were not of staircase engendering. Take for instance the following anecdote:

A policeman, surrounded by an enthusiastic audience, said to him: "You are drunk, you are under arrest." "That ain't true," snapped John, "but even if it was I'll be sober to-morrow while you'll be a damn fool all your life." It must occur even to his greatest admirer on reading this tale that he may have heard the retort on the stage where it has been bandied about for generations. However, it is quite true that he may have stopped in the middle of a fight when he was

urged by a bloodthirsty creature in the audience to "go in and mop up" his adversary. According to the story, he stepped to the front of the platform, raised his hand and said: "Gentlemen, this affair to-night is just a friendly set-to. Some day I may oblige you by killing a man." The vernacular may not be Sullivan's, but the sentiment likely is.

The distressing part of the book is the account of his contest with John Barleycorn. No one who has not himself a thirst for strong drink, or who has not lived and laboured with those who had it and succumbed to it, will be touched by it. But all drunkards, potential and actual, and all doctors who have witnessed the devastating results of the intemperate use of alcohol will sympathise with John L. and will venerate him for the fight he finally made and the battle he won. Had he been able to exercise a similar control of his appetite for food, he might still be the living example of reformation. Apparently there were plenty of friends to tell him that he drank too much, but no one dared run the risk of making an enemy of him by telling him that he ate too much, and so he went on adding to his avoirdupois until Fat Men's Club elected him to membership and even called him to office. This offended him enormously and hurt him deeply, for even after he went far beyond three hundred pounds, he was unwilling to admit that any one was justified in calling him fat.

He was proud of his strength which was colossal and of his oratory which was Lilliputian. But if his biographer is to be trusted, and I think he is, his speeches were often reflective of common sense, or perhaps it might better be said of common experience: "This talk of tainted money is all rot. In all my years of wild spending I never heard of nobody refusing to take the money of John L. Of all the money I gave to churches, schools and other charities, I can't remember a single cent being flopped back to me because it was earned by biffing some unlucky chap on the jaw. There is no such thing as tainted money, and I have handled about every kind there is. The preacher's hadn't ought to object to it. They ought

to be on the level in their professions just like us prize fighters always is. If any of you here has got what you think is tainted cash in your pockets, just drop it in my hat before you pass out. I thank you one and all very kindly, yours truly, John L. Sullivan." Preachers, moralists, uplifters, will find food for reflection in these words.

Mr. Dibble's biography is, as I said in the beginning, interesting and diverting, but he would have been well advised had some one suggested to him that he delete the epilogue; it is neither worthy of his scholarship nor of his sensibility.

§

James J. Corbett, whose dominant ambition was to make his conduct and appearance consonant with his sobriquet "Gentleman Jim," has written as much of his life as he thinks the public should know and he calls it *The Roar of the Crowd*. Mr. Corbett learned the ninth letter of the alphabet first and after he had mastered it he convinced himself there was small need to bother with the others, and besides he had no time. He must go into training. He must develop his ego; he must make it go centripetally and centrifugally with equal facility and he must develop his muscles and increase his weight so that he might become "Champion of the World." These things are not taught in school so he was expelled and took to fighting in a boxstall of his father's livery stable. "I instinctively used my head even at that age." That is the burden of Mr. Corbett's story. He always used his head before, during and after the fight. Before, to put the fear of Corbett into his opponent; during, to knock him out and gain his respect, and after, to win his friendship. After he got his ego, his muscles and his weight behaving satisfactorily, he cogitated, "I mustn't be modest; all successful prize fighters are arrogant, self-satisfied and noisy. I shall be arrogant and self-satisfied, but never noisy." After he had fought several successful battles in livery stables, he knocked out Joe Choiny-

ski in what Billy Delomey, "the most famous of all seconds," said, was the fiercest battle he ever saw. And Corbett whipped him with one hand! He not only admits it but asserts it. "It is a remarkable feature of this fight that I fought this whole battle with my left hand." Having done this, it was easy to convince himself he could whip Jake Kilrain with two hands, though his backer, Bud Renaud, who ran a gambling house in New Orleans and was "a splendid character" could scarcely be persuaded of the probability of it. But not so Gentleman Jim. He telegraphed his father, "Will whip Kilrain sure." He did it, and then telegraphed, "Won with hands down." Having gone on so well with his head, aided by one hand up, and both hands down, he determined to take on Peter Jackson, the great negro fighter from Australia, "a very clever man," said Corbett to a friend, "but no cleverer than I am." First he must make the negro angry, then get his goat, then whip him. That would lead the way to John L. Sullivan. Needless to say he did all these with decency and despatch. Then he "called" Sullivan. The latter was wont to restrict his challenge to those whose mothers had cuckolded their fathers. Naturally there were few takers. One evening when John and Jim were making a round of the saloons of Chicago, the latter tiring of the other's boastfulness said, looking him right in the eye, "Mr. Sullivan, you are the champion of the world, and everybody is supposed to think that you can whip any —— in the world. . . . I don't wan't you to make that remark in my presence again." And from what transpired in the next few seconds, Jim knew he had "got" his man. So it was comparatively an easy matter to go to Florida and give him the *coup de grâce*. Every one knows that he did. But he soon had a change of heart. It saddened him that those thousands who came to cheer the vanquished remained to fawn on the victor, and he said, "I will be immodest no longer, I will be magnanimous and just, I really did not whip Sullivan alone, J. Barleycorn and I did it together," and then he

J. J. CORBETT

Reprinted from "The Roar of the Crowd"
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went to the Southern Athletic, where he took a glass of milk. "This incident was wired all over the world and was published in many newspapers." The *Christian Science Monitor* and the *Dearborn Independent* took no notice of the event. They might well have done so without involuting their obvious rôles, for here was the birth of virtue. John L. reformed soon after and James J. figures that "this moderation helped me to what success I have had."

Soon Mr. Corbett met Mr. Fitzsimmons, but the less said about that the better. It facilitated his way to the stage which is where he really belonged. He deserted it now and then to take on a fighter and finally met Jeffries, who stopped him plentifully and permanently. That permitted him to devote himself to his café and to his lines.

The most amazing chapter of this biographical narrative is entitled "My Actor Friends." Here Mr. Corbett poses as a diagnostician in the field of psychiatry. "Come to think of it, I have had the misfortune to be present when six famous stars have lost their reason." Men lose their reason as they do their purses or their umbrellas. They drop through holes in the pocket or they are left in street cars. Dr. Corbett's procedure was original, but I find it difficult to believe he used his head as much in diagnosticating as in fighting. "What's all this talk about your going crazy?" said he to a great comedian already advanced in general paresis who instantly countered with protestation of complete sanity. The slang comedian with whom he played pool at the Lambs during his last rational hour "laughed and kidded" in his familiar way, but Mr. Corbett distinguished the psychic output from that of irrationality.

A friend and admirer of Mr. Corbett, a journalist, author and literary promoter says, in a foreword to the book, that the ex-champion did the book himself. Few will ask Mr. Anderson to prove it. "Jim said he wanted it as it is, faults and all." Jim is the man who got what he wanted. Did he want a biography, that is the question?

XIV

FICTIONAL BIOGRAPHY

Ariel, by *André Maurois.*
The Divine Lady, by *E. Barrington.*
The Nightingale; A Life of Chopin, by *Marjorie Strachey.*

BIOGRAPHY, like history, is often the most diverting and truest of all fiction; but when it is treated severely, it frequently lacks entertainment. We stand everything save boredom, even prohibition and fundamentalism. Some who would not read a book entitled *The Life of Shelley* might be tempted by a novel called *Ariel,* which is a delightfully presented and rigorously accurate biography of a great poet. M. Maurois has not added an iota of imagination to his book; he has stated the facts with the order and precision of the *Dictionary of National Biography.* But he has coloured them with the art of the novelist and he has done it in pastel tone, with a light hand and warm heart. It seems the consensus of opinion that the hand has been too light, but one feels between the written words the power of a soul without a superior; the fascination of an intelligence liberated from all bonds, unfortunately at times trammelled by the dictates of a heart that was not liberated. Reading *Ariel,* some will wish that Shelley had been a Latin; yet, England of doughty prejudices and dour Puritanism is the country where such strange individuality phenomena are frequently displayed. One marvels at this, just as one who knows the Italian people and their profound scepticism, marvels that they had St. Francis and St. Catherine.

Ariel has had a vogue and has received praise that would not be granted the *Dictionary of National Biography*. This indicates the appetite of humans for facts, when they are sugar-coated, disguised or made alluring by an attractive envelope. Biography presented in the shape of fiction is one of the best kinds of biography and the most interesting kind of fiction. Shelley's life contains material that would seem exaggerated if found in a novel, and it reveals facts that would be denied if they were set forth in fiction. Before it appeared in English translation, the book took France by storm. It did more than popularise the name of Shelley, it revived an interest in biography generally and it added allure to retrospects of the past, the past that had been so neglected and depreciated by partisans of ego-analysis, and that has been pushed aside by the psychological novel.

The lives of great men contain an inexhaustible fund of invaluable material which is at the disposal of the novelist. If he does not choose to be as frank as M. Maurois has been about Shelley, he may do what Rose Wilder Lane has done in the novel entitled *He Was a Man* which is a biography of Jack London. She has artfully disguised her subject while Maurois presents him to his readers with all the data of identification.

The charm of *Ariel* resides in the manner in which the story is told; in the graceful characterisations; in the sobriety of the style; in the portraits of the women who made Shelley's life happy or miserable; and in the brilliant contrast that the author has drawn between his hero and Lord Byron. The portrait of the latter, though sketchy, has such emphasis on the shading that the picture is complete and arresting.

Ariel is not the most typical example of fictional biography, for though it is an account of Shelley's life it is so faithful as to leave little room for imagination. Were it not told adroitly and gracefully, it would be no more picturesque than a record kept on index-cards. It creates a strange contrast with *The*

Divine Lady, a biography of Lady Hamilton, true, but stamped with the hall-mark of fiction. E. Barrington (Mrs. or Miss) had the most romanesque subject at her disposal when she undertook to popularise the figure of Emma Hamilton, the Emma of Nelson, whose beauty, grace, talent and intelligence kept Europe astir for the better part of the late eighteenth century. She deviated from the strict truth in several instances, but it was to improve on the truth, and to give to her novel the epic quality that Lady Hamilton's biographies had not heretofore displayed. *The Divine Lady* is more closely allied to fiction than to history, and since the author has not only great narrative power and an exquisite style, but the qualities that permitted Théophile Gautier to make *Mademoiselle de Maupin* a masterpiece, and genuine capacity for feeling and emotion, she presents Lady Hamilton in all her "divinity" with passionate need of admiration and achievement. Lord Nelson is likewise depicted with a sure hand. His reputation will suffer from the delineation, for in addition to the way he treated his wife, there was other conduct inconsistent with unqualified esteem. His *naïveté* was the seal of his doom, and it is allowed to no one to condemn a passion such as that which united Lady Hamilton and Nelson. Those who have not known it are not competent to judge—and those who have can find apologies and excuses for it.

Lady Hamilton's career was Napoleonic in its display, and, all proportions guarded, it followed the same cycle. Obscure birth, great qualities of mind (and in her case of body), rapid and miraculous ascent to high power and reputation followed by an increase of appetites and ambitions which blurred the straight path and made both her and Nelson want more than any human being can stand, a slow but fatal lowering of their stars, then hatred and scorn of the world, and finally, for her, death obscure even as birth. In a few years, Emma had run the gamut of all the ambitions and all the tortures; she had known the greatest ecstasies of love and happiness

LADY HAMILTON AS CIRCE

From "The Divine Lady," by E. Barrington
Courtesy of Dodd, Mead & Co.

and the lowest and most degrading debauches; she had dispensed her favours and received praises; she had scrubbed kitchens and been worshipped by Queens and Kings; she had allowed a boor to make a public exhibition of her charms, and she had sneered at the homage of a monarch.

E. Barrington has made Lady Hamilton come to life once more in the pages of her novel; she has caught her charm and her personality, understood her perfections and vices, and she has succeeded even in so grading her praise and disparagement that the reader is constantly aware of the scullery-maid masquerading as ambassadress, and of the demi-goddess hidden in the bosom of the protected *fille de joie*. Her real place was with the lowly, and she was never more at home than when she could shed her acquired English and her elegant manners and indulge in the language and activities that she had loved in her youth. E. Barrington has made all this clear, and she has given each startling contradiction in the make-up of the Divine Lady its proper emphasis—with the result that we wonder at such whims of nature, at such diversity of characteristics in the same person, without ever doubting the veracity of the author. It seems scarcely plausible that Lady Hamilton should have been as adaptable and sensitive to environment as she appears to have been—that she should have loved Greville with the loyalty and patient submission which she displayed, that she should have been so faithful and loving to Lord Hamilton until she met Nelson, and that she should have felt for the latter the irresistible passion which was the cause of her ruin. We marvel at the union of talents that occurred in her; the aristocracy of her singing voice, the vulgarity of her speaking voice, her mastery of wild horses and her inborn gift for the terpsichorean arts, her tact and diplomacy, and all the qualities which made her at the same time a divine lady and a prostitute.

Her most extraordinary gift was her power to feel the rôle she had to play in order to win hearts; and the diversity of

her accomplishments made such conquest easy for her. She won hearts, and she lost hearts, but when we turn the last pages of the book, we have only admiration for the Lady who inspired Nelson, and carried the renown of her country beyond its confines at a time when international affairs were nearly as muddled as they are a hundred years after her death.

The Divine Lady is the kind of biography which makes one care more for fiction—and the sort of fiction which makes one wonder why novelists do not write more about historical characters whose lives and personalities often surpass anything that imagination could dictate.

§

Miss Marjorie Strachey has written the latest word in the line of fictional biography: *The Nightingale; A Life of Chopin*. She has blended the facts of his life with the romance of fiction. By a series of sketches, of fugitive evocations, she has added to the permanency of Chopin as a man, and especially as an artist. She has made his genius permeate his actions, and she has endowed him with the dream-qualities of poetry and the realised qualities of practical life. Chopin is no longer an unapproachable genius; he is life itself seen through the veil of romance.

Miss Strachey has not done for her hero what E. Barrington did for Lady Hamilton; she has not called attention to his "amours," not even the one with George Sand; her task lay, not in giving us the emotional understanding of the musician, but in creating a true portrait of him. This she did by interweaving his correspondence with his conversations; his friends with his surroundings. They all form part of the background on which he shines all the more brilliantly that it is never exaggerated, and his life was enough of a romance to impart to the biography its qualities of ethereal dream

without addition or distortion of facts on the part of the biographer.

The Nightingale is more to be praised for what it does not say than for what it says. It shows restraint, dignity and poise, which are the accompaniment necessary to a biography of Chopin.

XV

MISCELLANEOUS

EVERYWHERE, THE MEMOIRS OF AN EXPLORER, by *A. Henry Savage Landor.*
WHAT THE BUTLER WINKED AT, by *Eric Horne.*

THE title of this book should be *Everywhere, Everything, Everybody,* by I. K. It-All. When Mr. Landor was two years old, he fell through the air twenty feet and landed on his head. His head swelled, and later he had epileptoid attacks. The latter forsook him, the former remained. If one were to estimate him from his last book, one would have to rate him the vainest author in the world, the world which still numbers Mr. Bok and Mr. Ford Madox Ford.

Explorer, painter, lecturer, inventor, writer—and supreme in all! There can be no doubt about it; he says it and calls witnesses from kings to savages, from queens to chorus girls, to prove it. Garibaldi caressed him, Marchand of Fashoda embraced him, Wilbur Wright envied and feared him, d'Annunzio acknowledged that his book on Tibet inspired *Piu Che l'Amore,* the Cuirassiers of Victor Emmanuel III presented arms when he went to call on the King, Pope Pius IX said to him: "You are my beloved son"—and we have no doubt that he was very proud of him—Roosevelt shouted "Thank God" when he saw him in the reception room of the White House, and Maude Adams confided to him her great ambition, which was, "like all American visitors, to be taken to lunch at the Cheshire Cheese." There need be no further curiosity about the retirement from the stage of this gifted actress at the height of her career; her great ambition was realised. All London worth knowing went to see Landor's

paintings and stayed to praise them; he was the first man to enter Pekin in the Boxer outbreak and the last messenger to get through Antwerp in the Great War; and he alone knows all the secrets of Tibet and its monasteries. He is strong and brave. He walked a Scotch gillie "who passed as the greatest walker in the world" off his legs, while his own remained so fit that later he was able to dangle them over a precipice six thousand five hundred feet high. In his spare moments from painting, exploring, inventing, and orienting, he gave lessons in courage to the lions in Africa. He is the man who has "run all possible risks from nature and human beings," and his motto has ever been "Death or no death, we plunge once more into the unknown."

Once only this admirable Crichton was stumped, and the experience shows how easy it is to trip a god when he is off guard. Once the house in which he was sleeping in London took fire. He was clad in his blue kimono which bore three huge white fishes on its surface. The temperature was twelve degrees below zero and the icy winds did blow. He watched the efforts of the fire-fighters "with the utmost concern and in attempting to keep the kimono well round me, as there were ladies present, the longitudinal seam behind, which had deteriorated in the laundry, suddenly split from head to foot. This compelled me to remain with my back against a wall until it would please the conflagration to stop." A wholly unnecessary tarry or turn on the part of Mr. Landor. There probably is not a lady in his native land, or yet even in the whole world, who would not admire him from the soles of his feet to the top of his head.

Mr. A. H. Savage Landor is a modest violet and the various photographs of himself which adorn his book testify it. But the world is in his debt; he discovered General Pershing. When we erect a national monument to our great General, it is to be hoped that we shall not neglect his discoverer. In the meantime he is handed the immodesty medal.

§

The refrain of a song popular a few years ago was "Everybody's doing it . . ." Were it sung to-day, "it" would mean writing biography. It is a good sign. The more we learn about others, the less repulsive is our thought, the less enigmatic our conduct. We should particularly encourage those who see us full-face and at short range, like valets, maids, nurses, secretaries, doctors, to write about us. M. Brousson throws more light on Anatole France's personality than everything that has been written about him.

If *What the Butler Winked At* was not written by a butler, the author had butler ancestors. Eric Horne does what he set out to do and he states his thesis clearly in the first sentence:

"Now that old England is cracking up, as far as the Nobility is concerned, who are selling their estates, castles and large houses, which are being turned into schools, museums, hospitals, homes for weak-minded—things entirely different from what they were built for—it seems a pity that the old usages and traditions of gentlemen's service should die with the old places, where so many high jinks and junketings have been carried on in the old days, now gone for ever."

He gives a picture of the "gentry" that is of real value. But the sentence quoted is more than sufficient cause for digression. It is a marvel. Who but a butler could be so ample and so involved. It is a fair sample of the book in many ways. The man can't write any more than a babbling child, but he does it all so unconsciously and yet so purposefully that he arrives somehow. He gets things said—plenty of them, and that is more than many professional writers do.

His descriptions of the life he knows are real, but more real than anything else is Eric Horne. He does not try to "reveal himself," but his book is a genuine self-revelation—

or perhaps a dead give-away. Probably this man knows more of the form of living than most Americans dream of—no slight slip in etiquette would have evaded his trained eye. And yet if there is such a thing as a "middle class" mind, he has it. Nothing could have made him equal to an exalted position in the world. Not that he had not brains; he had, and real executive ability, but it was the texture of his thinking which marked him for his job. You can't make chiffon from a meal sack.

Eric Horne was probably what generations of service and of strong class distinction made him. He was cast in a butler mould. No one thought of him in any other way. He himself did not aspire very high or long. The mould was too confining to permit of much moving around. In a thousand ways the quality of his mind is revealed. His jokes are cheap and flat and obvious. They are decidedly "back door" humour. He has absolutely no continuity of thought. He lived between door bells, telephones, electric buzzers. He thinks that way—jumps all over the place. He has no sense of getting to the point; he has to pack his master's dress clothes first and instruct the under footman. The book shows a continuous dissatisfaction with the manner of living that the "gentry" imposed upon their servitors. At the same time, it displays a scorn of the modern democracy of England. The butler can not think through his problem or even at it. He knows he does not like them as they are, but can not reconcile himself to a change. It is all curiously contradictory, like the thinking of a child.

Yet the Butler is no child. He has a kind of precocious astuteness, all out of harmony with the general fibre of his mind. He is keen and clever at times in his writing, though one wonders if he knows it. His descriptions are enviable. This about a fellow butler: "A 'mongrel' I called him. We had to be very careful not to let him see or hear anything we did not wish to go farther. He put me in mind of a fellow

behind a draper's counter who measures out yards of elastic." This last sentence is as vivid as Sherwood Anderson, only Anderson would have done it with conscious art; with Eric Horne it was spontaneous.

The book is valuable as a revelation of an individual, but more valuable as the show-up of an aspect of society largely neglected. It is like seeing the reverse side of the life that Wells, or even Galsworthy, writes of. The novel begins; the butler is bringing in the electric toaster. The mistress enters in an elaborate breakfast costume and a "pet." But instead of remaining in her presence, you follow the butler into the pantry. That is new, and not altogether pleasant. It is cramped back there. Beds are "let down" in the pantry and there is not too much freshness about the atmosphere. The cook quarrels with the housekeeper; the housekeeper spies on the maids. The butler lords it over the footmen; the footmen cuff the grooms. But they like each other. They have their dinners and dances where social barriers are even more strict than among the "gentry." Living is good—wine is plenty—if you have the keys.

Life here is quite like that on the other side of the picture, save that you have no subtleties, no nerves, no intrigues. Everything is out in the open, static, with a fist fight or so. At the same time there is a certain style to it. Things must be done properly. The silver is put in order—if you have to blister your hands—not because you are afraid of "the sack," but because of respect for things as they should be and for the traditions of the house. There is a curious infiltration of champagne somewhat mixed with dishwater.

As to the pictures of the "gentry," they are real, and at times touching. But they have been done before. We know the "gentry" better than we do their servants. The butler has, until Eric Horne spoke, been a sphinx to the world at large, so much so that one has been many times tempted to punch him to see if he is real. He *is,* and once having broken

the traditional silence there is no stopping him. Words fall over themselves in their haste to get written. This reminds him of that, which has no connection with what came before it or what is to follow. The butler is avenged! He has said his say. Let the gentry writhe if they will, or smile if they can. The butler takes a long breath—his first—he pops the gold buttons off his braided waistcoat. Let them roll!

XVI

THE LADIES

MADAME RÉCAMIER ET SES AMIS, by *Edouard Herriot.*
MY PORTION, by *Rebekah Kohut.*
NOON, by *Kathleen Norris.*
A WOMAN OF FIFTY, by *Rheta Childe Dorr.*
THE MOST FAMOUS BEAUTY OF CHINA, YANG KUEI-FEI, by *Shu-Chiung.*

FEW periods of French History have tempted the pens of biographers and historians more than that of the Directoire. It was then that political and literary passions clashed and in the effort to reconcile and unite them, expression of ideas was encouraged; *salons* were formed where the craft of literature, art and statesmanship could be discussed; and freedom of speech ceased to be a myth. Society was no longer composed of the exclusive aristocracy; personal merit, intelligence and wit were now the passports for the man—and charm, vivacity, culture and kindness for the woman. All of them strove to be numbered among the élite of the fastidious *salons*. Those who succeeded have their names permanently written in the annals of the period. Many of them contributed enormously to the development and dissemination of literature among the upper middle-class in France, and their influence is still felt among critics and writers. Only two generations separate us from them, and if Madame Récamier, Madame de Staël and Benjamin Constant seem like figures of another world, remote and dimmed, their younger contemporaries like Sainte-Beuve and Napoléon III belong to modern times. It is not the distance of the Directoire that makes it part of historical tradition; it is the extraordinary change

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that has taken place in manners, in customs and in society, since then.

Of all the names that come to mind when the time of the Directoire and the years following it are mentioned, none carries so much charm, mystery, fascination and meaning as that of Juliette Récamier. She personifies the early nineteenth century and as years go by motives become clearer, and understanding easier; as the vista of time improves judgment, biographers of Madame Récamier and her circle add to our knowledge and to our appreciation of the period.

The latest of these is Edouard Herriot, recently Prime Minister of France, a man of classical education, who attaches much importance to culture and who has always shown interest in literature. *Madame Récamier and Her Friends* testifies to his quality. The mere mention of her name suggests a world of wit, of beauty, of romance and of achievement. M. Herriot has neglected none of the facets of her charm. Indeed he dwells upon them at length; yet he gives to the story of her life more significance than a mere record of herself; it reveals the world of the early nineteenth century, and it is through this world that we contemplate and admire his heroine.

As a study of character, M. Herriot's attempt is not very successful. He has failed to make live one of the most living creatures of history; he has set up a statue which no Pygmalion could call to womanhood; he has modelled the effigy of a woman who remains cold and lifeless despite ample evidence of swarming life within. His biography is neither exclusively descriptive nor analytical. He has followed narrative order, and arranged his facts chronologically, but when it is necessary to the understanding of the heroine, he does not hesitate to anticipate actual events or to pass judgment on later actions. Obviously M. Herriot's effort was to make Madame Récamier part of a whole; her friends, especially toward the latter part of the book, take the floor constantly and leave her out of our sight and away from our thought. If the

author had succeeded in permeating his studies of her followers with her influence; if he had left her enough power to be felt throughout the book, whether or not he was dealing with Madame Récamier herself, his study would have been more successful. But, not himself inspired by her charm, viewing the whole period cold-bloodedly and critically, he has been unable to convey Madame Récamier to his readers. The advantage of such analytical examination is that it facilitates judgment.

The great merit of M. Herriot's book is its judiciality; he often supports his own conclusions by those of others, qualified and sincere. Indeed, this is one of M. Herriot's most distinguishing traits. Whenever opinions differ, when historians and biographers do not agree, and when interpretation depends upon personal reactions, the author effaces himself and allows events and facts to speak for themselves. The final word has not yet been said of the controversies that were waged in France after Madame Récamier first dazzled *le monde,* and M. Herriot does not propose to say it. He has set up the period of the Révolution, of the Directoire, the tentative monarchy, the Empire and second monarchy clearly, concisely, specifically. His style is substantial, unadorned and fluent.

A question of the greatest controversy has always been the non-conjugality of the Récamiers. M. Herriot devotes a fifth of his book to discussion of the reasons that have been suggested to explain it. He calls in physicians and psychologists to bear witness and pass judgment; he keeps his ears opened to gossip and to malicious chatter; and he keeps an eye out for any indiscretion behind the curtains of the *alcôve,* news of which might have trickled through the walls of time. Discussions of personal relations between husband and wife, post-mortem investigations and attempts at unveiling the mysteries that were savagely guarded in life by their participants are in doubtful taste. M. Herriot seems to uphold

the thesis that Madame Récamier was her husband's daughter—an opinion which is defendable since he defends it—but which is too monstrous to be advanced without irrefutable proofs. The idea does not seem to repel him, and he finds explanations and apologies for it. The few documents which are left that tell us how they lived under the same roof he interprets as he chooses. Yet, there is no suggestion of scandal; he is no bearer of oil to throw upon the smouldering embers of her marital fire; he gives the results of his efforts to elicit testimony, to obtain evidence and to submit it to the world's jury. All that can be said of the situation which existed between Récamier and his wife was that, after all, it was their affair. The fact that they had no conjugal relation may have been due to her physical condition, or to his, or the result of mutual agreement. The only right the biographer would have had to dwell at length on it would be if it had had such bearing on the life of his heroine that it might be taken as the fulcrum of her reactions and behaviour. It did not, in Madame Récamier's case, despite M. Herriot's comment that, "perhaps from this medley of abnormal circumstances in which she had been placed, there remained in her suspicion, a leaning toward discouragement, fear of love, a sort of resigned serenity, and the first germ of the *coquetterie* for which she was so often reproached by those who did not understand its causes."

She was no more a coquette than any woman would have been in her position. She was not a beauty, but her charm and her finesse were such as to conquer hearts more effectively than any Juno might have done. She had intellectual powers which raised her far above her sex together with an unusual capacity for fidelity, tenderness and sympathy; she hesitated to wound her friends or to refuse them anything in her power and thus she gave permanency to the affection her charm engendered. She was wealthy, sought after and beloved; but her chief asset was goodness. Her admirers and friends, in-

deed all she admitted to her heart, were unanimous in praising her goodness, her tireless devotion to their pleasures, her constant preoccupation with their pains.

M. Herriot is at his best when he discusses Madame de Staël's influence over her young friend Juliette. The ex-Premier is by nature and experience better fitted to understand Madame de Staël than Madame Récamier. Her political ideas were akin to his; her mind had many masculine traits, her culture was deep; her talent admitted; her influence sought. She supplies most of the background of the book, and many of the anecdotes with which fortunately the book is sparingly padded.

Now and then M. Herriot paints himself in the picture and all too rarely expresses his ideas of life and human nature. We like to be assured that "Women who are pretty and who can not but know it are neither flighty nor fanciful; they are always self-contained; a prudent reserve accompanies them even in their weaknesses, which are never unconscious." When he defends Madame Récamier against possible criticisms, he admits that nowhere in her history is there anything that could be interpreted as unworthy of her situation, or that would justify her reputation as a woman given to intrigue. It can not be denied that she opposed at first to the attacks of her admirers a subtle and world-wise fencing; "but men have perhaps an unjustified tendency to label '*coquetterie*' all that which, in a woman, obstacles their pride, or curbs realisation of their desires."

Characterisations of the heroine are few, and it is obvious that her latest biographer has not sought to make her stand out particularly among her contemporaries. But she does, despite all; she was the shining light around which all the moths swarmed, dazzled by its brilliancy. Most of the characterisations are quotations from contemporary authors, particularly Benjamin Constant, who portrayed a side of Juliette which not all her admirers knew. Speaking of her conduct

toward Lucien Bonaparte, he writes, "She was disturbed by the unhappiness she created, angry at her own disturbance, reviving hope unconsciously by the sole aid of her pity, and destroying it by her carelessness as soon as she had appeased the suffering that her passing pity had engendered." Chateaubriand felt the truth here expressed and made use of most of Benjamin Constant's material regarding Madame Récamier, but passed over this particular characterisation of the woman he had loved. Sainte-Beuve, far-sighted as he was and gifted with vision, expressed the same idea: "Lucien loves; he is not spurned, yet he will never be accepted. There is the nuance. It will be the same with all the men who will rush to her, and with all those that will follow. . . . She would have liked to remain in *April,* always."

M. Herriot first modelled his heroine and after pedestalling her, proceeded to walk around his statue and survey it. He remodelled here, shortened there, smoothed this surface and softened that line. He treated it as photographers treat their plates. By giving it ample dimension, he has called attention more to the large lines than to the details. When he finished it he set it up in a vast plaza. This bigness of scope enabled him to group about her, as a rich background, the figures of those who were attached to her chariot with ribands of love and of admiration. The list of them is long; they were all intellectuals. Madame Récamier, though kind to every one, never attracted fools or bores, and her *salon,* which was the *chambre d'accouchée* of romantic literature, never sheltered a shallow mind, a cold heart or an uninteresting soul.

Only once was Juliette really so consumed with love that she hoped a divorce would free her—to marry Prince Augustus. But there again her compassionate heart took pity on a husband who had lost his fortune and who, despite many gallant adventures, harboured tender feelings for her. Since she could not have Prince Augustus, she would have no one; and from the episode of Benjamin Constant and of Ballanche,

whose love was most pathetic and devoted, to that of Chateaubriand, we see Madame Récamier, anxious to please, glad to be able to do it, avid of admiration which was directed to her mind more than to her body, and willing to make any sacrifice to insure the success of a friend, the accomplishment of a plan, the perpetuation of an idea.

The imprisonment of Madame Récamier, during the few days when she was suspected of plotting against the safety of the State, recalls other names whose possessors did not escape as gracefully as she did, but M. Herriot does not allow himself to be distracted. He is telling the story of Madame Récamier and her friends, and he is not hypnotised by the high spots of the tragedy. Neither discursive nor willing to pass judgment, he is the impartial historian, the unprejudiced biographer. That he admires and loves Madame Récamier there can be no doubt, but that is unavoidable, and his love is neither blind nor impetuous; it is a reasoned love, but it is not so engrossing as to exclude criticism and interpretation.

The merit of *Madame Récamier and Her Friends* is founded in the soundness of its conception and the brevity of the narrative. There is repetition neither of words nor of effects. Few expressions could be deleted without taking something from the story. It neither offers suggestions nor makes startling discoveries regarding Madame Récamier. To write of Madame Récamier in her own spirit and in that of her time (which she was so influential in moulding) requires more graciousness than M. Herriot gives; it needs less matter-of-fact handling, and it should be softened by a great deal of poetry. Others have so described her and the pictures that they made reveal her idealistically. M. Herriot deals more with the matter than with the spirit, and what his biography lacks in poetry it makes up in reality.

The end of the book, which tells in detail of the death of Chateaubriand, is well rendered. Though filled with emotion, it does not overflow. Madame Récamier had moved into his

apartment that she might be near him at the end. Blind and old, she showed herself equal to the demand that was made on her strength and courage; "she was constantly at the bedside of the dying man who seemed to be dragged for some time out of his drowsiness by the beautiful days of June. He was always silent. He could speak no longer; Madame Récamier could see no longer."

On the day of his death, "every time Madame Récamier, overwhelmed with sadness, left the room, he followed her with his eyes, without calling to her, but with a look of anguish in which was painted the fear of never seeing her again. She was there at the last minute."

Her death is related with the same simplicity, but the narrative has a touch of the grandiose. M. Herriot was wisely counselled to undertake the biography of Madame Récamier, and his wisdom was to hear and obey.

§

Rebekah Kohut, a Hungarian Jewess who has lived all her life in America and who has been closely identified with the Jewish intelligentsia of this country, believes that she has a story to tell, and that she should chronicle the emergence of the American Jewess into the communal life of the country. She has a story; it is an interesting one and she tells it convincingly. *My Portion* is the expression of a personality that has had firm contacts with varied currents of a full and active life. The daughter of a rabbi of liberal views and the wife of another, a distinguished scholar, Mrs. Kohut is widely known to her co-religionists as a woman of heart and determination.

Her story is not a conscious attempt to analyse, dissect, propound, or in any way enlarge upon the "inner workings" of the intellectual and emotional elements that go to make the individual. A sentence at the end of the book conveys the

spirit of the writing: "As I turn the leaves of the past, I find myself growing as interested as though some one in a book, *not myself*, were the active participant." Marie Bashkirtseff would hardly have said that. She would have been interested because *it was* herself. Mrs. Dorr would not have said it, and her reason would have been much the same, though she would have expressed it differently. Mrs. Kohut's book is a self-forgetting autobiography.

Her account of her husband's life is also the revelation of a personality. This man lives before us, both he and his work, the *Aruch Completum*. Of this Mrs. Kohut writes:

". . . when I looked forward to the problems of married life, I counted my future charges as a husband and eight children. Soon I learned I should have counted them as a husband, the *Aruch Completum*, and eight other children. The oldest daughter called the Aruch her oldest brother, and pretended to be jealous of it. Certainly it received all the consideration and preference of the traditional first-born. The rest of us at certain times felt our secondary importance."

And Mrs. Kohut was born amid the exactions of scholarship—this was no amateur's point of view!

In her account of her husband's life and work the writer reveals herself no less than in the parts more directly autobiographical. Here lay her deepest concerns and interests. As he came first during the years of her marriage, so he is the most prominent feature of her book.

My Portion is so sincere, straightforward, and genuine that one is sure the glimpses one gets beneath the surface are true ones. A strong, active personality pervades every page. You get the revelation, not by a concentrated, but rather by a pleasantly diffused, light. Mrs. Kohut sums herself up very clearly in her last sentence:

"For a moment, I stop there and say: 'That's all. That has been my portion.' But no, life holds even more, and in that

more it has been my portion to share, too. Life, above all, is a going on, a never resting. And I see myself always going on, never pausing in the present, always restless, always straining forward for something that has not been but should be."

Is such a book of service to mankind? Decidedly yes. To the unprejudiced it is a valuable picture of an ever-interesting people. To the prejudiced it can not fail to bring a feeling of respect by its dignity and direct dealing. Mrs. Kohut's early struggle (was it worth while to be a Jew, frankly and openly, to face social ostracism and hatred) and her very definite stand can not fail to awaken admiration. She was born a Jewess, and took her place in the world as a power for the Jews. She did it very largely for religious reasons. The religious genius of her people was too strong, too vital, to be abandoned, whatever the cost. She gives an insight into the religious aspirations of such men as her father and her husband that is almost Biblical in its qualities.

Her picture of the family life of the finest Jewish types is eminently worth while, did the book contain nothing else. They worked for and with one another despite hardships and varied fates. The tribe still feels its call and its power in the response to that call. All through the book one is made to feel a spirit which must have come out very clearly in one of Mrs. Kohut's talks. The quotation is long, but it seems to strike the keynote of the book:

"Later I was asked to address the pupils of the fashionable and exclusive Ely School. I could see that these lovely girl pupils giggled when I was presented as a Jewess. I was determined to have my revenge, and in my talk made them so homesick that they wept. Then I told them part of Heine's *Princess Sabbath* and the *Rabbi of Bacharach,* in which the ghetto Jew carries the burden typical of his race through the ages. On Sabbath eve, returning from the synagogue and entering his little home, he finds the table set with snowy cloth and lighted candles and the Sabbath bread, and becomes trans-

formed, not only in figure, but in face. The bowed shoulders straighten, light enters his eyes. Is he not then a Prince of Israel, and is not his home a palace? The girls giggled no more at the mention of 'Jew.'"

What Mrs. Kohut did for those pupils she will do for her readers: give them a better understanding of the Jews and therefore greater respect. And aside from the question of race, the book is of real value because of the wholesome attitude toward life that it constantly presents. It is an oasis amid the "glowing sands" of erotic literature, and affected scribbling where to-day we wander.

§

Of all the persons who have succeeded in attaining fame, wealth and happiness and who remember with kindliness their years of struggle, obscurity, poverty and misery, few harbour such tenderness in their hearts for their hard years of labour as Kathleen Norris shows in *Noon,* a little autobiographical sketch. It might as well be the story of all those she has loved and who have contributed to her self-fulfilment. They are numerous and exceptional—are they perhaps embellished and polished by love? Have they perhaps taken on a new aspect with the help of years? Were they really as worthy of admiration and as near perfection as Kathleen Norris makes them? We have no way of knowing, but we can make no mistake about one thing: the mother-theme is the predominant idea throughout the book. It is constantly repeated with different nuances and cadenzas, but it throbs with life and reality. The picture Kathleen Norris draws of her own youth reminds the reader of Miss Louisa Alcott's *Little Women.* The atmosphere of the household is not soon forgotten.

They, Mrs. Norris and her husband, suffered the inevitable torments of young people who come to New York, with twenty-five dollars a week for all support, and who expect to take the city by storm and climb to the top of the literary ladder. The way they did it was made easy and beautiful through love, understanding, good friends, a little planning, much effort and mutual concessions. Luck was not always with them, but Kathleen Norris had the good heart not to be discouraged, and she refused to believe that success was not a natural sequence of work. She had much to be thankful for, and she knew it.

Noon may not display either genius or much profundity, but it is like a ray of sunshine; it brightens up a life that too many are tempted to find futile and unjust and it leaves no room for pessimism.

§

Mrs. Dorr's *A Woman of Fifty* is about as introspective as an account of a very active king in a chess game might be. It is, in truth, an account of feminism poured into an autobiographical mould by a clever reader of the trend of the day toward that form of literature. There is much in it that is personal, no doubt, but certainly the motive is in the direction of a "movement" rather than toward an analysis of individual reactions to that movement. If Mrs. Dorr's purpose had been unmixed self-revelation, I have the feeling she would have done it in a more up-to-the-moment manner; in the hair-splitting, soul-dissecting fashion of the hour.

As biography, I don't think it holds water. As a summing up of the struggle of women toward recognition as entities, it is vigorous, rather dashing, well put together with a perception of essentials, and valuable as a record.

The writer becomes more likeable as the book progresses,

but the reader is satisfied that fate has not made his and her paths cross. At times, he wishes she would either get out of the picture or add something vital to it. She has made a "go," but at the same time, in trying to write a double header, a so-called personal narrative with a purpose that is far from personal, she has now and then failed; the individual gets in the way of the subject up for discussion—feminism. But the book is readable and this is a quality of which not all biographies can boast.

§

Chinese ladies have had their day in literature. They have served the same purpose as European women in building or destroying Empires when such existed. Reading about them, we do not anticipate that we shall deepen our knowledge of personality, but we know that we shall be convinced anew of the potency of pulchritude; of the inconstancy of man.

Yang Kuei-Fei, who lived in the eighth century, was one of a quartette of famous beauties whose tradition is still alive in the Celestial Empire; one was known for her beauty, another for her patriotism; a third for her virtue, but Yang Kuei-Fei, who was the most beautiful of all, is known to fame for her artfulness. She held, in her lily-white hand, the fate of the Empire, and, aided by her beauty and her ambition, she climbed to the high position of Emperor's favourite concubine. That she was not successful in steering the ship of state into a safe harbour may have been partly due to woman's alleged and accepted incapacity in political matters—but the story of her life as told by Mrs. Shu-Chiung shows plainly that it was largely due to her falling in love with a young Tartar. The Emperor loved her—and his love was of the sort that blinds its victims so completely as to make them absurdly credulous—but he was unable to resist the charm of his former favourite and of the sister of Yang Kuei-Fei. Yang

Kuei-Fei was in love with the Emperor, because he was Emperor, and incapable of withstanding the ardent love of the Tartar. Orgies and debauches culminated in tragedy, downfall and death—but as in all Chinese stories there must be a tenuous element of dream, of etherealness, of mysticalness—and it relieves the horror of the story and its pathos.

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